



Voluntary Service

worldwide

Guidelines for the admission and
supervision of volunteers

Freunde der
Erziehungskunst
Rudolf Steiners

Life has a lot to offer – **so do you!**
www.freunde-waldorf.de

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EDITORIAL

Dear colleagues at the partner organisations,

For more than 20 years the Friends of Waldorf Education has been actively involved in promoting voluntary services. During this time, a world-wide network has been forged and we now work with 350 partner organisations in more than 50 countries in Africa, North America, Latin America, Asia, Europe and Oceania.

Experience has proven that there are always a lot of questions concerning the acceptance and supervision of German volunteers. This is why we have compiled important information from more than 20 years of experience. On the following pages you will find answers and tips concerning your questions on voluntary services, which we find relevant and are repeatedly asked. The guidelines are composed as a reference guide, which you can use whenever questions arise, or if you want to look up important information.

We hope that you will find many helpful answers. If not please feel free to contact us at any time.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Susanna Rech-Bigot'. The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name 'Susanna' being larger and more prominent than the last name 'Rech-Bigot'.

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OFFICE HOURS (CET/MEZ)

Mo – Fr: 9:00am to 4:30pm

EMERGENCIES

The volunteers have the emergency number for the Friends of Waldorf Education, via which you can reach us at any time.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Our insurance's emergency number: +49 (0)211 53 63 73 59

Collective insurance number: 0863050094

Availability: 24 h/day

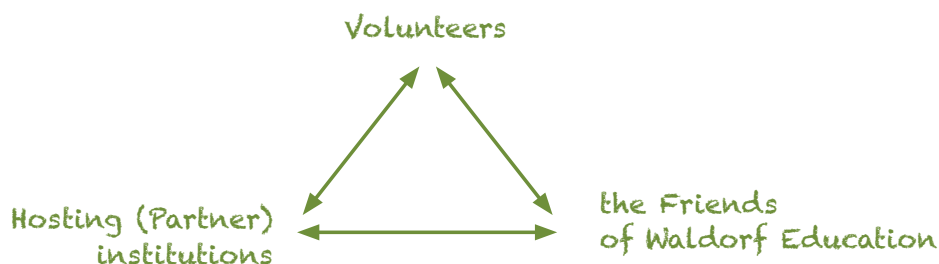
1. WHAT IS A VOLUNTARY SERVICE?

In Germany the concept of the voluntary service is becoming increasingly popular.
A voluntary service:

A voluntary service

- Is a non-paid, voluntary employment in a social or educational institution
- Offers room to learn and gather experiences
- Caters to the biographical development of the volunteers
- Offers the chance for inter-cultural dialogue
- Is fixed to the duration of 12 months (in certain cases 11 months)

On the organisational level the voluntary service includes three parties:



The voluntary service of the Friends of Waldorf Education is backed by either government programmes or government-funded programmes:

- The International Youth Volunteer programme by the German federal ministry for family, senior citizens, women and youth, which is represented in the Friend's **Foreign Year Abroad programme (FYA)**
- The developing countries voluntary service weltwärts by the German Federal Ministry for economic cooperation and development

You can find more information on each programme in [chapter 8.](#)

2. HOSTING INSTITUTIONS – VOLUNTEERS – FRIENDS OF WALDORF EDUCATION: MUTUAL WISHES AND EXPECTATIONS

All persons involved have wishes and expectations for voluntary service. In various seminars, workshops, and visits, we have had the chance to work out the most important factors and in the following chapters we would like to present the most important results to you.

As our experience shows, the wishes and expectations of all people involved are not always the same, but this shouldn't worry you. Nevertheless it can be very helpful to keep those differences in mind, especially if the differing expectations cause problems. ([see also chapter 7](#))

2.1. The volunteers' wishes and expectations

*„We are first mature adults,
When the tools of our will (physical development),
our hearts that feel responsibility (spiritual development)
And the full intellectual power of judgement (intellectual development)
Are available to the ego, to the personality as harmoniously as possible.“*

Helmut von K gelgen

Most of our volunteers have reached the end of their third septennial (between the age of 18 and 21) and are therefore in transition from adolescence to adulthood. (see also chapter [Kapitel 5](#))

This stage of transition is often accompanied by:

- The search for orientation and the self
- Great idealism
- For the first time being away from home
- For the first time being placed in the context of a professional work environment
- For the first time standing on one's own two feet

This leads to the fact that many volunteers reach their hosting institution with certain expectations and wishes:

- They want to be taken seriously.
- They want to be appreciated.
- They want to be able to apply themselves.
- They want to join in discussions and make their voices heard.
- They seek for instruction and support.
- They want to experience self-efficacy.
- They want to make an impact.

Of course, not all of the volunteers share the same idea of how they want the work and the situation at their institution to be. However, they have shared with us some ideas on what makes an institution a “good one”:

- **Job training and guidance:** They wish for a competent guide, who will take the time to show the newly arrived volunteers around. Many volunteers wish to be accompanied in their tasks, at least at first, and don't want to be left alone by themselves. The volunteers want to have the feeling that they are welcome at the institution.
- **Assignments and responsibilities:** Most volunteers would like to have assignments they can achieve independently and autonomously, however they do not want to be left alone with the responsibility for other persons.
- **Recognition:** The volunteers wish to receive recognition and appraisal for their work.
- **Mentor:** The volunteers would like to have a personal contact person, who should not be affiliated with the institution or at least does not work closely with the institution. They also appreciate the opportunity to have regularly scheduled conversations with their mentor.
- **Participation:** The volunteers wish to be integrated into the internal communications at their institution. They appreciate it when the decisions and changes are communicated to them, even more if they are included in the decision making process.
- **Leisure time:** Volunteers like to meet people that are not from their work environment, to forge friendships, to travel within the country, and to go out and have a good time.

After many conversations with the volunteers we have the impression that many are willing to accomplish a lot. They are even willing to go outside their comfort zones if they have feel like they are involved in a community and receive recognition for their contributions to the daily life and existence of the community.

2.2. The partner organisation's wishes and expectations

Based on many workshops, which made it possible to exchange views and standpoints between the partner organisations and the Friends, the partner organisations have expressed the following wishes and expectations:

- **Preparation:** The volunteers should be prepared for their voluntary service. It is important that they are sensitive to other cultures and customs and are willing to take responsibility for their own actions. The Friends of Waldorf Education is expected to provide the volunteers with the necessary information on the partner organisations.
- **Information flow:** The partner organisations are expected to communicate changes concerning the voluntary service quickly and comprehensibly. The volunteer's feedback should be passed on from the sending organisation to the partner organisation. The Friends of Waldorf Education is expected to create a cooperative exchange between colleagues.
- **Availability:** In case of administrative questions and difficulties with the volunteers, the partner organisations wish to have a contact person at the Friends' office. They wish to receive support on financial and administrative questions from the Friends of Waldorf Education.
- **Selection:** They wish to receive help in selecting their volunteers:
 - Volunteers are expected to be mature, independent, and reliable.
 - Volunteers are expected to be committed, ready to learn, open to new situations, patient, and flexible.
 - Volunteers are expected to be psychologically stable and physically fit.
 - Volunteers are expected to have a neat appearance, be sensitive to cultural factors and have basic knowledge of the country's language.
 - Volunteers are expected to have previous knowledge of anthroposophy or interest in Waldorf education.
 - Volunteers are expected to adapt, to fit in, and to respect local hierarchies.
 - Volunteers are expected to tackle problems and to lend a helping hand, whenever the partner organisation needs one.
 - Volunteers can voice their own ideas and stimulate changes as long as they fit into the partner organisation's structure and are realistic.
 - Volunteers are expected to be an additional help to the institution after the first phase of instruction, and not an additional burden; there should be a healthy balance between giving and receiving.

2.3. Wishes and expectations of the Friends of Waldorf Education as a sending organisation

The Friends as a sending organisation also has certain wishes and expectations for the collaboration. Since all voluntary programmes receive federal grants, programmes must be consistent with certain regulations, which the Friends needs to monitor.

- **Communication:** A transparent and trustful cooperation with you as a partner is important to us. We strive to communicate important changes concerning our voluntary services, and we rely on you to communicate changes concerning the voluntary service at your institution to us.
- **Organisation:** The volunteers' room and board are organised when they arrive. Also, the volunteers' duties should be decided upon arrival. The volunteers should mainly be assigned to tasks in the social field; they can only complement the work of your skilled personnel, but never replace them. Volunteers are an additional human and non-material resource, and add the aspect of cultural exchange at your institution.
- **Arrival/Welcome:** Upon arrival the volunteers should be picked up and welcomed into your organisation.
- **Supervision:** In our view a good supervision includes professional instruction as well as a personal contact to the volunteers:

Professional guidance/instruction: A trained employee of the institution must instruct the volunteers in their field of work. After this initial training the volunteers should receive regular training in the professional field. Regular meetings with co-workers (at least once a week) should be integrated into the daily routine. Also, it should be possible for volunteers to ask for counselling and advice at anytime and they should receive the support they require and want. Challenging experiences at work, which bring the volunteers to an emotional limit should be professionally attended to, absorbed, and processed. The volunteers should not be left to deal with traumatising events (assaults, violent outbursts of people they look after etc.) on their own.

Personal guidance: Besides professional guidance, the volunteers also need to receive personal guidance at your institution. An assigned mentor, who does not work in the same team as the volunteer would be best. Ideally, the mentor should be a trustful outsider who has close ties to the institution and will accompany the volunteers throughout their voluntary service. This person should be chosen with diligence, show interest in the volunteer, accompany her/his development and give guidance in problematic situations.

Safety: Your institution has to brief the volunteers on aspects of safety, which apply to your locality. If necessary, the rules for correct conduct should be written down.

- **Mutual appreciation:** Mutual appreciation – a grand goal. The volunteers, who may be for the first time testing themselves in a work environment and in the world, deserved to be recognized and appreciated. At the same time, the people at the partner organisation, who enable the volunteers to do just that, deserve and need recognition and appreciation too. The sending organisation, who wants to be a good mediator between both parties, also needs to be appreciated. Everyone wants their worth to be seen and their efforts to be appreciated. A small birthday ceremony, a farewell party, and a positive leaving certificate are official signs of appreciation. But often only a little effort is needed. Sometimes an encouraging glance or an appreciative comment makes all the difference.
- **Administration:** Concerning administrative processes we strive to have a good exchange with you and are always available to answer any of your questions.
- **Our expectations of the volunteers:** We expect our volunteers to act responsibly when it comes to their commitment to your institution, but also in the administrative processes with us. We are particularly concerned with attributes such as reliability, dependable communication, engagement, and a willingness to learn.



3. THE FRIENDS OF WALDORF EDUCATION

3.1. Waldorf Worldwide

Since 1976 the Friends of Waldorf Education support Waldorf schools, Waldorf nursery schools, curative educational institutions and social projects worldwide. Through the collection of donations and by passing on 100% of the money abroad, more than 600 projects have been sponsored. The money in the international relief fund, which is not linked to any one particular project, provides fast relief wherever and whenever it is needed. Through the establishment of education sponsors, we enable children from poorer backgrounds to attend Waldorf schools.

Our office in Karlsruhe is concerned with voluntary services and emergency pedagogy. Emergency pedagogy is part of the psycho-social sector of humanitarian relief and addresses traumatised children in war- and disaster areas.

3.2. Supporting organisation for voluntary services in Germany and worldwide

Since 1993 the Friends of Waldorf education has been active in voluntary services abroad. This field of work was created when a young Waldorf student wanted to do a volunteer year in South Africa. After this, the organisation became a state approved sending agency for international voluntary services. Since then more than 7,000 young people have fulfilled a voluntary service in anthroposophic institutions worldwide.

3.2.1. Motivation for voluntary services abroad

The field of voluntary services was created due to various motives:

The first important motive is to support our partner organisations with their educational and/or social-therapeutic work in the field, by sending engaged young adults to work in their organisation.

A second motive is our wish to accompany young people in the development of their character. In our fast-paced and hectic world, which is dominated by the use of media and technology, in which people feel more and more separated from each other, we want to use the voluntary services to create opportunities and spaces for engagement. We want the young adults to have the opportunity to become responsible and free human beings, with a healthy self awareness at the core of their being. Every individual should have the freedom to develop the foundation of their individuality. At the institutions of our partner organisations, the young adults have the chance to take on responsibilities for themselves and the world around them, grow through their experiences, and develop and live out their youthful ideals.

The first two motives lead to **a third one**: The young adults (mostly aged between 18 and 21 years, thus at the transition from the third to the fourth septennial) find a closer contact to Waldorf education at a biographically relevant phase in their lives and will hopefully integrate the experiences of their volunteer year into their later career paths.

3.2.2. Incoming programme: International volunteers in Germany

Besides sending volunteers abroad, the organisation also enables volunteers from abroad to fulfil a voluntary service at Waldorf educational and anthroposophic institutions in Germany. The incoming programme was established in 2006.

You can find more information on the incoming programme in chapter 8.3 of these guidelines or via www.freunde-waldorf.de/en/community-service/incoming-voluntary-service-in-germany

3.2.3. German volunteers in Germany

In 2011 the Friends extended their service to include the branch of national voluntary services. Ever since, young adults can also volunteer in social and/or Waldorf educational institutions in Germany through the Friends of Waldorf Education. In Germany we cooperate with around 200 partner organisations.



4. PARTNER ORGANISATIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Seeing the world through someone else's eyes...
Exploring the unknown and oneself...
Submerging into other living environments...
Working to help others...
are reasons for voluntary service.

4.1. Advantages of hosting German volunteers

Bring the world to your home! Some advantages are:

- Active help in your daily routine
- Promotion of intercultural encounters
- Passing on and picking up of new ideas
- Creating educational opportunities outside of school
- Supporting and promoting social engagement
- Witnessing and accompanying young people in their development.

4.2. Conditions

In order to host volunteers for a 12-month long voluntary service as a partner organisation, the following criteria should be met:

- Your institution should have a Waldorf educational or anthroposophic orientation.
- Your institution should have charitable status, which is oriented on the common good (certificate needed).
- The volunteers' duties should mainly be in the social field.
- Room and board: For the time of their stay, the volunteers must be provided with room and board. The volunteers can also be put up with a host family, which you should find for them. Should you only be able to fulfil part of these requirements, please contact us.
- Mentor: For the time of their stay, you are asked to provide a mentor for the volunteers, who will assist them and take care of any arising questions.
- In the FYA programme, your organisation should pay a monthly allowance to the volunteers. Should you have trouble providing this, please contact us and together we will find a solution.

If your institution meets all the requirements, you can apply to work with the Friends of Waldorf Education. You can find the application forms for the accommodation of German volunteers via <https://www.freunde-waldorf.de/en/community-service/infos-fuer-einrichtungen/information-for-institutions-outside-germany.html#c1241>

In the first phase we will check which programme your institution has the capability to work with and will apply for the placement of volunteers from the applicable governmental ministry. (see also Chapter 8).

The final approval of volunteer placements through the applicable governmental ministry can take up to six months. As soon as we receive notification from the government, your institution will be approved to apply for volunteers. You can find more information on the application process in chapter 6.1..

If you are interested in collaborating with us, you can also contact us directly:
phone: +49 (0)721 354806-0 or via e-mail: freiwilligendienste@freunde-waldorf.de



4.3. Financing

Federal voluntary service is financed through solidarity cooperation. This cooperation consists of the hosting organisation, the volunteer's own initiative (finding a circle of supporters), and the Friends of Waldorf Education working together. The majority of the volunteer placements receive federal funding through the German Federal Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

4.3.1. What the Friends of Waldorf Education provide

- A portal for online applications and advisement when choosing volunteers
- Pedagogical preparation and supervision of the volunteers
- The entire administrative work
- International travel fees for the volunteers (travel to the hosting institution and back)

Depending on the volunteer programme:

- Payment/subsidisation of allowances
- Subsidisation of room and board

4.3.2. What the hosting institution provides

- A mentor or contact person for the volunteers
- Room and board
- As circumstances require, an administrative fee at the end of the voluntary service; however our placement of volunteers is not dependent on payment of this fee.

5. THE VOLUNTEERS

5.1. The volunteers' age

Most of our volunteers have recently finished school. They are generally between 18 and 20 years old. Most of the recent school graduates are 18 years of age, because the length of schooling in Germany has been reduced to 12 years.

5.2. Waldorf pupils

Throughout the past years about a third of our volunteers were former Waldorf pupils. However, most of the young people who apply for a voluntary service through the Friends of Waldorf Education have no previous personal experience with Waldorf education or anthroposophy.

5.3. Volunteers' motivation and professional orientation

School graduates

After their time in school, during which they have acquired a lot of theoretical knowledge, many young people in Germany want to gain a year of practical experience.

After their volunteer year most former volunteers start university or a vocational training. Some have concrete ideas of what exactly they want to do after their volunteer year and what kind of career they will pursue. Many others use the volunteer year for orientation. They have not yet formed a concrete vision of which profession might be the right one for them or they wish to use the volunteer year as a way to find out whether work in the social or education field is the right path for them.

Experienced Professionals

From time to time people who have already completed professional training or their academic studies, and have professional experience apply for a volunteer year. They are generally looking for a chance to apply their professional knowledge at an institution in a foreign country, or wish to use a sabbatical year or gap year to do something completely different.

6. VOLUNTARY SERVICE

6.1. The application process

The application process for prospective volunteers consists of two steps:

1. Application with the Friends of Waldorf Education as supporting organisation/sending organisation
2. Application with the partner/host organisation abroad

6.1.1. Application of the prospective volunteers at the Friends of Waldorf Education

Requirements

The volunteers need to:

- Be 18 years of age when they start their voluntary service abroad
- Be a German citizen or have a permanent residence permit for Germany
- Be willing to integrate into a new cultural and practical work environment
- Be open-minded, able and willing to learn, team-oriented and interested in the culture and way of life of others

Application

The applicants apply online on the homepage of the Friends of Waldorf Education via www.freunde-waldorf.de/freiwilligendienste/weltweit/bewerben.

As soon as the application is completed and received by the Friends, it is reviewed and assigned to one of the programmes (weltwärts or FYA). If everything is in order, the applicants receive a letter of acceptance from the supporting organisation (in this case, the Friends).

Along with their letter of acceptance, they receive access to the application portal. There the applicants will find all of our partner organisations and can apply at up to five organisations at once. This means that the volunteer might have applied at four more organisations besides yours.

6.1.2. Application of prospective volunteers at your institution

The application at your institution happens online via our portal for applications and hosting institutions.

Usually the applicants will send you their curriculum vitae and a letter of motivation in which they introduce themselves and explain why they want to do their voluntary service at your institution.

The portal for applications and hosting institutions

The entire application process is done via the so called “portal for applications and hosting institutions.”

Whenever there is an application for your institution, you will automatically receive an e-mail. Please log into the portal immediately after you received the e-mail to check the application.

To log into the portal you need a user-id, which you receive from us prior to your first log-in. With just a few clicks, you can request your password on the portal’s welcome page. In the portal you have the option of looking at all the applications of prospective volunteers. You will also find all necessary contact details and can also ask for further information on the applicants (e.g. additional credentials). Should any problems arise with usage of the portal, please feel free to contact us at any time.

Acceptance, denial and binding agreement (PPA)

Your institution decides whether an applicant is appropriate and you can accept or decline the application online. In order to make the decision easier, you could for example converse with applicants via Skype in order to get to know them better. If you want to accept the application you can issue a binding agreement online (PPA = Partner Project Agreement). This binding agreement is the contract between you and the volunteer. As soon as the volunteer has accepted, you will receive a re-confirmation from the Friends of Waldorf Education. From this moment on the agreement of all three parties (applicant, hosting organisation and sending organisation) is legally binding. The applicants you decline have the option of applying at another organisation. Please decide as quickly as possible, whether you will accept or decline an applicant. Delays can result in the applicant receiving and accepting a placement at another institution and losing the ability to accept your offer.



Documents

You can directly ask the applicants for credentials and further documents. Some institutions have developed questionnaires, which all applicants have to answer. The applicants usually receive such questionnaires via the homepage of your organisation or via e-mail.

The volunteers sign a contract with the Friends, which regulates certain things. Increasingly more of our partner organisations, which have worked with many volunteers over the years, have also created supplemental little “rule books” with the most important information, rules and regulations for volunteers. These are generally sent to the volunteers during the application phase so that both sides can consider whether or not the match would work for both sides. All additional contracts should be communicated with us.

For the application phase to run smoothly we rely on you to provide us with up to date contact information of you and your institution.

6.2. Preparation and supervision of volunteers through the Friends of Waldorf Education

Besides supporting them with administrative problems, we also support the volunteers before, during, and after their voluntary service. The volunteers have the option of reaching someone from our team of pedagogically trained co-workers 24/7. All volunteers visit a preparatory seminar before they leave. After they return from their service they visit a seminar for departing volunteers and an engagement conference. In some countries we offer additional mid-term seminars.

6.2.1. Before the service: Preparatory seminars

In the following we will take a closer look at the contents of the preparatory seminar.

The preparatory seminar provides the volunteers with information and insight, and prepares them for the following year.

The goal of the preparatory seminar is to provide the volunteers with ideas for personal reflection, and for reflection on certain topics which are centred around living and working abroad. The following topics are part of the preparatory seminars of the Friends of Waldorf Education:

Anthroposophy/Waldorf Education

In this part of the seminars the volunteers receive an introduction to anthroposophy, they are prompted to reflect on questions concerning anthroposophy, and asked to encounter the topics with an open mind. If possible, they will also observe the work at an anthroposophic/Waldorf educational institution in Germany, e.g. a Camphill school, a Waldorf school, or a Waldorf kindergarten.

Internal/external perspective, own cultural experience

In this unit the volunteers are asked to reflect upon their own family background and to use these insights while imaging their upcoming voluntary service. This helps to provide an understanding of and for differing cultural experiences in order to counter stereotyping. The topics might include: Understanding and awareness of internal and external perspectives, the volunteer's own experiences, intercultural communication, a presentation by the volunteer on a cultural topic, which concerns the host country, etc.

Communication, conflicts, awareness

In these units the volunteers are given the opportunity to learn about communication patterns. By talking about conflicts and their resolutions, the volunteers' attention is directed towards recognising the underlying personal needs that lead to conflict. Topics can include: The volunteers' own ability to manage conflicts, assessment of strengths and weaknesses, strategies for resolving conflicts, observational exercises, proximity and distance, non-violent communication, etc.

Socio-political topics

This unit places the voluntary service in a greater context. This includes the critical reflection on present-day and historical topics in politics, economy, social topics, and globalisation.

Expectations/motivations for the voluntary service

A critical approach to the voluntary service includes insights into expectations and the clarification of the volunteers' motivations. Topics include: self-reflexion, recognizing one's limits, the volunteer's role in the host country, the volunteer's role at the host institution, internal and external awareness, etc.

Medical Unit

This unit is compulsory for weltwärts seminars, but not required for FYA seminars. In this unit, which lasts one to two hours, a doctor will discuss all medical questions and topics that are relevant for the host country.

Overarching topics

- The role of the Friends of Waldorf Education
- Safety
- Drugs, Alcohol
- Sexuality and relationships, HIV/Aids
- New media/Social networks
- Present-day Camphill communities

We endeavour to give the volunteers basic information about the institution they will work at. However we will not prepare them for their specific tasks at your institution and we cannot prepare them for the specific conditions of your country. However, we try to motivate them to reflect on their thoughts and actions. We hope that as a partner organisation you will build on this aspect.

6.2.2. During the year of service: Accompanying pedagogical seminars and mid-term seminars

Freiwilliges Jahr im Ausland (FJA)

Many institutions offer continued training throughout the entire volunteer year. In the context of the FYA programme, these so called “accompanying pedagogical seminars,” which are held by the partner organisation, are compulsory for the volunteers to attend.

Depending on your institution’s field of work (Camphill, Waldorf school, etc.) you can discuss various topics. Here are some suggestions:

- history and development of your institution
- Anthroposophy
- Waldorf pedagogy
- Disorders and syndromes (autism, down syndrome, etc.)
- Childhood development
- Biodynamic farming
- Safety in your country
- Health topics, e.g. HIV/Aids
- Social topics and insight into political development, etc.

We will provide you with more detailed information at the start of each volunteer year.

weltwärts

In the context of the weltwärts programme the volunteers will visit as five-day long mid-term seminar abroad, which is organised by the Friends. In countries where both programmes are offered, the FYA volunteers can also attend the weltwärts mid-term seminars.



6.2.3. After voluntary service: Seminar for returning volunteers and engagement conference

Seminar for returning volunteers:

The seminar for returning volunteers serves to give volunteers the opportunity to reflect, process, and evaluate their volunteer experience. It also offers a space for finding opportunities in the future that tie in with the experiences of the voluntary service.

Engagement conference:

The engagement conference exists to offer assistance for possible projects. It helps former volunteers in finding ways of passing on their experiences and strives to motivate the volunteers to continue their social engagement. The volunteers have the opportunity to develop structures, networks, and support-groups at the conference. They are also introduced to the Friends of Waldorf Education's alumni network.

6.3. Phases of the voluntary service from the volunteers' perspective

During the voluntary service many volunteers experience certain phases. These phases are shaped by high- and low points, which fit into the progress of the year. These phases are normal during the course of the voluntary service, and have the power to enable processes of learning and personal growth for all parties involved.

Scientifically based researches also distinguish various phases (compare Kalervo Oberg¹). The concept was continuously modified and refined, and the Friends of Waldorf Education has also observed these phases during their many years of counselling volunteers.

This is not a universally valid model about the volunteers' emotional state of being during their voluntary service. However we often find that the progression is a similar one. The volunteers might live through different phases; experience them in a different order or in varying degrees of intensity.

Before the voluntary service

- I. The first phase takes place before departure. The volunteers are in an intensive phase of preparation and are mostly very excited. Emotions alternate between positive anticipation and fear of the unknown
- II. The second phase takes place just after arrival in the host country. It is characterized by curiosity. Many things are experienced as new, exciting, and exotic. Most aspects of the new experience are seen in a positive light and time flies by.

During the voluntary service

- III. During the third phase the first routines are established. The volunteers take over increasingly more tasks and responsibilities and the first signs of exhaustion start to appear. Many volunteers still have problems communicating in the language of the host country. Changes in diet and differing climatic conditions also negatively affect the volunteers.
- IV. The fourth phase is characterized by irritability and homesickness. Many volunteers begin to see things in a negative light and feel extremely exhausted, which gets progressively worse as time goes by. Often volunteers will become ill during this time. This phase can be described as the phase of cultural shock.
- V. The fifth phase is an upswing of new energy. The volunteers now know the various processes of their tasks and often take over responsibilities. They begin to master the language of the host country and forge new friendships. The outlook shifts back to being a generally positive one.
- VI. The sixth phase occurs at the end of the voluntary service and is shaped by two emotional states. On the one hand, the volunteers have settled in so well that they feel at home in their host country. At the same time many realise that their time at the institution won't last forever and they begin to make plans for the future. Both feelings can be experienced as positive and negative at the same time because on one hand the volunteers feel finally really "settled in" and on the other they recognize that their "departure is imminent."

These phases place differing demands for the supervision of volunteers.

¹ Kalervo Oberg: „Cultural Shock: Adjustment to New Cultural Environments“. In: *Practical Anthropology* 7/4 1960, S. 177-182.).

6.4. End of voluntary service at your institution

The end of a year full of impressions, work, and experiences should be celebrated with an appreciative farewell from the institution with as many beloved people as possible being involved.

6.4.1. Closing meeting

A one-on-one closing meeting between you and the volunteer gives both of you the opportunity to reflect on the past year and to voice a personal feedback.

6.4.2. Leaving certificate

A closing meeting can also be a good opportunity for writing a leaving certificate. The leaving certificate is feedback for the volunteer as well as documentation of his or her work at your institution. This certificate is particularly important for future job-applications. It should be handed to the volunteer before his or her departure. The volunteers need to hand in a copy of this certificate to formally complete their voluntary service. Please issue the leaving certificate on your institution's stationery and have the responsible person sign and stamp it.

The following points should be incorporated in a qualified certificate:

- The volunteer's personal information (name and date of birth)
- Dates of the voluntary service
- The name and a short description of your institution
- Description of the volunteer's tasks
- In agreement with the volunteer, a brief evaluation of the volunteer's motivation, creativity, openness to cooperation, special competences, and notable accomplishments during the voluntary service

We recommend that you talk to your volunteer about what should be included in the certificate, and what should be left out. Further documents, which are necessary to complete the voluntary service (e.g. certificate of end of service from host institution), will be handed in by the volunteer.

6.4.3. Evaluation of the voluntary service

We strive to continually advance the collaboration between us as a sending organisation, you as our partner, as well as the volunteers. We look forward to your feedback on the volunteers and the co-operation we provide, which helps us accomplish this goal.

After their voluntary service the volunteers also write a report on their service and fill out a questionnaire, which they send back to us.



7. PROBLEMS AND EMERGENCIES

During the year of voluntary service we are competent contact persons for you and the volunteers.

Should any problems arise, we see ourselves as being mediators.

As described above, volunteers display varying reactions to the many new impressions, demands and cultural differences they experience during their voluntary service. We view hard times and down moods as opportunities for development, which go hand in hand with a year abroad.

7.1. Contact persons at the Friends of Waldorf Education

7.1.1. The volunteers' contact persons

Every volunteer has a contact person at our office, which he or she can contact if necessary for advice or if they are in trouble. Usually volunteers have met their contact person at the preparatory seminar.

7.1.2. The hosting institution's contact persons

You have your own contact person at the Friends of Waldorf Education. In doubt, please contact us via the following phone number: +49 (0)721 354806-0 or via [e.mail: freiwilligendienste@freunde-waldorf.de](mailto:freiwilligendienste@freunde-waldorf.de). Our office hours are: Monday to Friday 9:00am-4:30pm (cet/MeZ).

Should any problems arise, the volunteer or you may contact us, and we will establish an exchange between the affected parties and then act as mediators to find out what the underlying problems might be. We have the fundamental approach that problems should be talked through and solved wherever, whenever, and between whomever they arise. We are happy to assist you with this process.

7.1.3. Problem solving on site

This includes conversations with the mentor, which resolve problems such as switch of the host family, changing areas of responsibility, organisational problems, i.e. allowance, days off, room and board, etc.

We are particularly interested in finding resolutions "on the ground", because they open up chances for development from which all parties involved might benefit.



7.1.4. Switch or termination

If no solution for the problem can be found on site, there is the option of switching the host organisation or terminating the voluntary service. Both options mean that the volunteer will leave your institution. For us, a termination of the voluntary service is always used as the “option of last resort.” The decision for the volunteer to leave the organisation prematurely can be made either by the volunteer or by your organisation. Should leaving your institution become an option, please contact us as early as possible so that we are integrated into the process.

In preparing the volunteers, we stress the fact that they are not allowed to leave your organisation at the drop of a hat, but instead they need to discuss this decision with you (exception: should a medical emergency arise). Vice versa, we ask you to inform the volunteer, should you decide to terminate the voluntary service, and to grant the volunteer sufficient time to leave your organisation.

Should you terminate the voluntary service on your behalf, we request that you voice this first after having a conflict-resolution conversation with the volunteer and after giving a written warning. An exception to this rule is serious circumstances which allow for termination without notice. The written warning and a notification of cancellation needs to be e-mailed to the volunteer and to us.

7.1.5. Emergencies and emergency numbers

Office

Before he or she leaves, every volunteer receives an emergency business card on which the emergency numbers for insurance and for the Friends can be found.

Should an emergency happen about which you want to inform us, or for which you need our help, please call us in Karlsruhe: +49 721 35 48 06-0. The office hours are Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 4:30pm (MeZ). The volunteers will have also received the number of an emergency mobile phone, by which they can reach a co-worker 24/7.

Insurance

By calling the insurance's emergency number, the volunteers can receive assistance from someone who is familiar with the insurance and can help them in case of emergency. The line is manned 24/7 and the co-workers can help you in finding a near-by hospital, or in organising direct financing for the costs. The hosting institutions are allowed to call the insurance, should a volunteer be in a situation of medical emergency. There should always be someone there to answer your call in your country's official language.

Insurance's emergency number: 0049 211 53 63 73 59

Please provide the insurance with the volunteer's group insurance number whenever you phone them. Group insurance number: 0863050094

8. VOLUNTARY SERVICE PROGRAMMES

As mentioned in [chapter 1](#), the Friends of Waldorf Education is a state approved provider for two different volunteer programmes, which have their own rules and regulations. Both programmes are state approved, receive federal funding, and are offered through separate federal offices:

Foreign Year Abroad (FYA) = International youth voluntary service of the German federal ministry for families, senior citizens, women, and youth

weltwärts = Voluntary service of the German federal ministry for economic cooperation and development in developing countries

The programmes have different focal points: for example weltwärts can only be offered in countries of the global south, and only by partner projects with an emphasis on political development. The proper programme for your institution will be decided through consulting the guidelines of the ministries.

Note on health insurance

Both of the programmes require that as a sending organisation we provide health insurance for our volunteers. This may seem unnecessary in those countries in which the volunteers are automatically integrated into a statutory health insurance due to their work-status. But in case of a severe illness, the insurance provided through the Friends of Waldorf Education is helpful because it includes patient-transport to Germany, which a local insurance might not offer.

This is why we ask you to accept that the volunteers might have two insurances in some countries or hosting institutions.



8.1. Foreign Year Abroad

- Generally offered in all countries
- Voluntary service for young men and women aged 18 to 27
- Orientation of content: Social learning through volunteering
- Start of the voluntary service: usually between July and October
- Duration: 11 or 12 months
- Volunteers establish a “circle of supporters”
- Allowance is usually paid by the hosting institution
- Pedagogical supervision through the Friends of Waldorf Education: 10-day preparatory seminar, 5-day returning seminar, 3-day engagement conference
- Pedagogical seminars, which accompany the volunteers’ work within the hosting institution: seven days each 4.5 hours long. Information provided separately.
- State regulated and supported programme
- Responsible ministry: German federal ministry for families, senior citizens, women, and youth in the context of international youth voluntary services
- All volunteers are provided with a health-, accident-, and liability insurance through the Friends of Waldorf Education
- We also support the volunteers when booking their trip

FOREIGN YEAR ABROAD

THROUGH THE FRIENDS OF WALDORF EDUCATION

8.1.1. Schematic representation of the FYA

APPLICATION AT THE FRIENDS OF WALDORF EDUCATION AND SELECTION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application at the Friends of Waldorf Education as a sending organisation 2. Preselection of the applicants through the Friends of Waldorf Education 	
APPLICATION AT THE HOSTING INSTITUTIONS ABROAD AND SELECTION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Friends activate five selected and matching host institutions through the portal for applications and hosting institutions of the <i>Friends</i> 2. The volunteers apply at the hosting institutions 3. Online-acceptance of the hosting institution and a binding contract is established 	During this time the volunteers examine and analyse the host country
PREPARATION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Setting up a “circle of supporters” 2. Organisational preparation 3. Pedagogical preparatory seminar (10 days) During this time the volunteers examine and analyse the host country 	<p>Establishing a “circle of donors”</p> <p>Visa, booking the trip, working on language skills, vaccinations, etc.</p> <p>Preparatory seminar: contents include: Intercultural and work relevant topics, basics of Waldorf Education and anthroposophy, reports on the country, reflecting on expectations and concerns, developing an awareness of their role as a volunteer, rights and duties during the voluntary service, practical tasks</p>
ABROAD	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support from the mentor at the hosting institution and the <i>Friends</i> in Karlsruhe 2. Accompanying pedagogical seminars at the hosting institution 	The volunteers attend accompanying pedagogical events, which are offered by their institution. After 6 months the volunteers send a report on their voluntary service to the Friends.
END OF THE VOLUNTARY SERVICE	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5-day returning seminar 2. Closing report 3. 3-day engagement conference 	<p>contents: Reflection on their personal experiences, reflection on the host country's culture and opportunities for further engagement in the host country.</p> <p>getting to know options for further engagement in Germany, networking etc.</p>

Within the scope of the international youth voluntary service:
supported through the German federal office for families, senior citizens, women, and youth



Bundesministerium
für Familie, Senioren, Frauen
und Jugend



8.2. weltwärts (voluntary service in developing countries)

- This voluntary service can only be provided in so called “emerging and developing countries” according to the OECD-list.
- Voluntary service for young men and women aged 18 to 28
- Orientation of content: work in relation to development politics
- Start of the voluntary service: usually between July and October
- Duration: 12 months
- Volunteers establish a “circle of supporters”
- Allowance paid by the Friends of Waldorf Education
- Pedagogical supervision through the Friends of Waldorf Education: 25 days split into a 2-day orientation seminar, a 10-day preparatory seminar, a 5-day intermediate seminar, a 5-day returning seminar, and a 3-day engagement conference.
- Pedagogical seminars, which accompany the volunteers’ work within the hosting institution: seven days each 4.5 hours long. Information provided separately.
- State regulated and supported programme
- Responsible ministry: German federal ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
- All volunteers are provided with a health-, accident-, and liability insurance through the Friends of Waldorf Education
- We also support the volunteers when booking their trip

WELTWÄRTS

THROUGH THE FRIENDS OF WALDORF EDUCATION

8.2.1. Schematic representation of the weltwärts programme

APPLICATION AT THE FRIENDS OF WALDORF EDUCATION AND SELECTION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application at the Friends of Waldorf Education as a sending organisation 2. Preselection of the applicants through the Friends of Waldorf Education 3. The applicants visit a 2-day selection- and orientation seminar 	
APPLICATION AT THE HOSTING INSTITUTIONS ABROAD AND SELECTION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Friends activate five selected and matching host institutions 2. The volunteers apply at the hosting institutions 3. Online-acceptance of the host institution and a binding contract is established 	<p>Selection of the volunteers based on the following criteria: engagement, artistic abilities, other interests and talents.</p> <p>During this time the volunteers examine and analyse the host country</p>
PREPARATION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Setting up a “circle of supporters” 2. Organisational preparation 3. 10-day pedagogical preparation seminar 	<p>Establishing a “circle of donors”</p> <p>Visa, booking the trip, improve language skills, vaccinations, etc.</p> <p>Contents include: Intercultural and development political topics, topics, which concern the work environment, basics of Waldorf Education and anthroposophy, reports on the country, reflecting on expectations and concerns, developing a perception of the role of a volunteer in southern countries, rights and duties during the voluntary service</p>
ABROAD	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A written preliminary report (every three months) 2. 5-day Intermediate seminar abroad 	<p>At the project: guidance from the mentor and the <i>Friends</i></p> <p>Exchange and reflection on the past duties of the voluntary service, encouragement for further engagement</p>
END OF THE VOLUNTARY SERVICE	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5-day returning seminar 2. Closing report 3. 3-day engagement conference. 	<p>Themes of the returning seminar: Reflection on personal experiences, reflection on the hosting country's sociological and political development and thoughts on further engagement</p> <p>Learning about opportunities for further engagement in Germany, networking</p>

Concept and financing:

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development



Bundesministerium für
wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit
und Entwicklung



8.3. Incoming – voluntary service in Germany

Since 2006 we have offered international volunteers an opportunity to do voluntary service in Germany. Since 2011 the programme has been offered in the context of the German federal voluntary service (a new support programme of the German federal office for families, senior citizens, women, and youth). To date about 150 people from all over the world since its founding in the programme, which has included representatives from around 60 countries. The volunteers mainly work at social therapeutic institutions. We also offer placements at institutions for curative education, institutions which work with the elderly, in the biodynamic agricultural sector, and at Waldorf schools and Waldorf nursery schools.

The voluntary service is not designed as job training and not intended for providing a stepping stone for immigration to Germany. The programme's intention is to provide the volunteers with an opportunity for experiencing Waldorf educational work over a limited span of time. We hope that the volunteers have the chance to apply the acquired knowledge when they return home. This is our way of strengthening our connection to our partners abroad and of supporting the worldwide Waldorf movement.

We cordially invite all people who would like to take part in a 12-month long voluntary service at a Waldorf educational institution in Germany to apply. It is possible to start the voluntary service in February or August. The application should be sent in about six months in advance of the planned start of the voluntary service.

Generally everyone can take part who:

- Is between the ages of 18 and 99 years
- Resides permanently outside of Germany
- Has basic German language skills
- Is already socially engaged in their home country
- Is ready to integrate into a new culture and a new social environment
- Is open towards anthroposophic and Waldorf Educational fields of work
- Has completed an internship, lasting at least 2 weeks, in their home country prior to their voluntary service

Beforehand we support volunteers in preparing for their service and in applying for a visa. There is no participation fee. The costs for the preparation (visa fees, language course, charges for documents) and the travel costs to Germany are to be paid by the volunteers. The volunteers have the option of applying for a travel-grant, which covers 30% (max. 50%) of travel costs.

While the volunteers are in Germany they will receive free room and board and a monthly allowance. The Friends will also provide a health-, accident- and liability insurance for the volunteers.

During their year of voluntary service the volunteers are mentored by our pedagogues and they attend five seminars. The seminars support the cultural learning processes, the working process, and the insights into anthroposophy and Waldorf Education.

You can find further information and the application forms on our website:

<https://www.freunde-waldorf.de/en/community-service/incoming-voluntary-service-in-germany.html>

8.4. Quality management of voluntary services

Over the past years the quality of voluntary services has been subject to a critical discussion within various levels of the German participants and international partners. The wish for consistent quality standards has received increasingly more attention which is demanded by the political facilitators, who provide the financial background.

As sending organisation the Friends of Waldorf Education take part in an official process of qualification and have thereby received the Quidf quality certificate, which proves the quality of a voluntary service.



Thus the Friends are committed to uphold certain quality-standards in organising voluntary services. There are regular inspections on the maintenance of these standards.

At this point we would like to present you with the standards, which the Quidf Agency has formulated with regards to the cooperation of host organisations and sending organisations:

- Selection of volunteers: partner organisations as well as sending organisations are involved in the process
- Mutual understanding of a voluntary service: The mutual understanding of the host organisation and the sending organisation is written down in an agreement of partnership.
- Personal supervision of the volunteers by the host organisation: Personal supervision through a mentor needs to be guaranteed
- Professional supervision of the volunteer by the host organisation: A skilled employee needs to supervise the volunteer and needs to introduce him or her to their field of work.
- Regular exchange between the host organisation and the sending organisation: Contact details should be updated on a regular basis and the contact persons should be known. The flow of information has to be guaranteed.
- Appreciation of the volunteers' engagement: The sending organisation as well as the host organisation are asked to express their appreciation for the volunteers' work
- Letter of reference/Certificate: At the end of their voluntary service, the hosting institution hands the volunteers a certificate, which they can use for application purpose
- Host organisation's feedback to the sending organisation: At the end of the voluntary service the host organisation gives feedback to the sending organisation

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