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INFO-KIT TO VOLUNTEER

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General Aspects

European Union Federation of Youth Hostel Associations (EUFED) in cooperation with promoters organizes a project where young Europeans could perform unpaid and full-time/part-time (or as agreed) voluntary activities in hostel of a foreign country within or outside the EU. The federation believes that a strong focus on training and personal and task-related support will help young people to develop skills and competences which will be useful in their future employment or education.

EUFED's aim of this project is to provide a non-formal learning and intercultural dimension to volunteers and promotion to hostels.

EUFED cooperates with promoters as with partners of the project which help EUFED in promoting the project in all European countries and finding young volunteers for the project.

This document is intended for volunteers involved in the project. It gives information to volunteers about what can be expected in general terms before, during and after the service period. Each volunteer carries with her/him ideas, expectations, needs and habits that deserve to find a respectful and trustful hosting environment, receptive of individual specificities. At the same time, Participant Organizations often devote a great deal of time, energy and resources to set up a project; they can therefore expect that the volunteer shows a similar level of respect for and trust in their commitment to develop activities in their local community.

"Guide for Exchange of Youth-Volunteers in Europe" provides guidelines on particular aspects of the implementation of the project. These guidelines take into account the great variety of project formats and fields of service, and they need to be adapted to the very specific environment of each project. It is strongly recommended that potential volunteers read this document before agreeing to take part in the project.

PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATIONS

National youth hostel associations (NAs) or hostels they manage can participate in this initiative. Cooperation in this initiative shall be composed of Host Organization (hostel or NA) and EUFED. Host Organization (hostel or NA), EUFED and Volunteer are required to conclude a Volunteering agreement. EUFED remains as the Coordinator of a project.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are all young people aged 18 to 30.

DURATION

The duration of the volunteering activities is decided by participant organizations and volunteer.

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SIZE

No maximum size for volunteering project. The size of the project and of the partnership will depend on the expected number of volunteers to be exchanged.

VOLUNTEERING AGREEMENT

The Volunteering agreement is a mandatory agreement signed between EUFED, host organization (NA or hostel) and volunteer for the purpose of the project.

FINANCIAL REGIME

There is no EU contribution to this volunteering project.

DEADLINE

The project on volunteering is continuous and information/questionnaires/feedback must be submitted to EUFED on or before the deadline EUFED specifies.

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Specific aspects

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

The volunteer has to be informed about youth hostel movement and its spirit.

Prior to her/his departure, the volunteer must receive clear information about the project, in particular about the tasks to be performed, accommodation, training and support. If the host placement is located in a live-in community, the volunteer must be informed about the rules and conditions that apply in such a community and which relate to her/him.

Prior to her/his departure, the volunteer is responsible for informing Host Organization and EUFED about any circumstances that may influence her/his capability to carry out certain tasks and about any individual special needs. If necessary, she/he should provide accurate information about health-related issues.

The volunteer must inform EUFED and Host Organisation about the exact dates of her/his departure and arrival. This information should be provided well in advance before the start of the service.

FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

The volunteer must read, agree on and sign the Volunteering Agreement together with Host Organisation and EUFED. By signing the Agreement the volunteer agrees to have read and understood the terms and conditions of the volunteering project. Violation of rules will result in immediate termination of the Agreement and without further responsibility from EUFED and Host Organization.

Each party (including the volunteer) is responsible for respecting the project details as set out in the Agreement.

Participation in the project is free of charge for the volunteer. Except for a payment of her/his travel costs, the volunteer must not be charged, either fully or partially, directly or indirectly, for taking part in the project.

Host Organisation is in charge of providing a volunteer an insurance against occupational disease and accidents while carrying out the volunteering roles.

The final selection of volunteers will be confirmed by EUFED 2 to 3 months before the starting date of the volunteering. Upon confirmation, the volunteer must contact the embassy of the host country for the other required documents (other than volunteering agreement) if necessary. The volunteer must obtain a visa, if so required by the legislation of the host country.

The volunteer is entitled to receive a certificate, attesting her/his participation in the project and the experience and skills she/he has acquired during the period of service. A certificate is provided by EUFED.

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POSITIVE ATTITUDES

The volunteer should take an active role in setting up her/his project together with Host Organisation and EUFED.

The volunteer must respect the rules and the organisational structure of the Host Organisation. The volunteer must also abide by the laws in force in the hosting country.

The volunteer must keep the Host Organisation and EUFED informed about her/his whereabouts during the period of service. While abroad, the volunteer should give EUFED regular feedback on her/his experience and must evaluate the overall project when requested by EUFED upon her/his return.

PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Host Organisation must take care of the practical arrangements in order to support and guide the volunteer from the moment of his/her arrival in the host country.

The volunteer is entitled to free board and lodging. Her/his accommodation must remain available for her/him throughout the entire service period, including holidays.

The Host Organisation must ensure that the volunteer can live in safe and clean accommodation and can eat sufficient and healthy food.

The volunteer must take good care of the accommodation that has been provided for her/him.

SUPPORT, TRAINING AND MEETINGS

Prior to departure, the volunteer must receive the Info-Kit prepared by EUFED for the stay abroad, according to her/his needs and in line with the Agreement.

Upon arrival in the hosting country the volunteer should receive appropriate task-related support and guidance to enable her/him to carry out the agreed tasks.

For personal support, the volunteer has a mentor with whom she/he will have regular meetings throughout the service period. The mentor must be appointed by the Host Organisation, and must not be the volunteer's supervisor or be otherwise directly involved in the volunteer's daily activities. The mentor should help the volunteer to get integrated within the organisation, the project and the local community. The mentor should help the volunteer with administrative issues, if necessary. The volunteer must accept the role of the mentor as the person responsible for her/his well-being and must attend the regular meetings organised by the mentor.

VOLUNTEER'S TASKS

The volunteering conditions must respect the volunteer's personal health, safety and dignity, and be in line with the national laws of the hosting country.

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The volunteer must not carry out high-responsibility tasks alone or unsupervised.

The volunteer should be encouraged to use her/his own ideas; creativity and experience to develop his/her own projects or activities relating to volunteering.

Any changes in the project and in the volunteer's tasks, areas of responsibility, support and training must remain in line with the general set-up of the agreed and approved Agreement and must be agreed between the volunteer, Host Organisation and EUFED.

RISK AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

The volunteer must not act in any way that could put others or her/him at risk of being injured.

If a conflict situation arises, the volunteer may ask her/his mentor to facilitate communication between the volunteer and the local environment or Host Organisation.

The mentor should be able to provide an independent and objective evaluation of the situation.

If conflict arises between the volunteer and the mentor, the volunteer can ask to get another person appointed as her/his mentor.

In the event of a conflict situation, the volunteer should be supported and must cooperate actively with Host Organisation and EUFED to avoid communication problems.

If a serious incident occurs, the volunteer can expect the mentor to establish and maintain appropriate contact with EUFED and insurance company, if necessary.

In the event of a serious incident or conflict situation that cannot be resolved in other ways, the volunteer can leave the project. This, however, should always be the last resort and should be agreed with Host Organization and EUFED.

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