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## **Call for the authors of online courses at the Alliance online learning platform**

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### **About us – [www.alliance-network.eu](http://www.alliance-network.eu)**

The Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations is a European based International Non-Governmental Youth Organisation of like-minded organisations not aligned to other international structures. It is a cooperative network of independent and active national organisations, working together on the quality and development of International Voluntary Service. It is a cooperative network of both big and small voluntary service organisations which interact in a solidarily way supporting each other. Our vision is of a world where young people and communities enjoy an inclusive growth and participate for the benefit of their communities.

The Alliance has 50 members in 29 countries in Europe, Asia and America. Each member organisation runs an annual programme of International Volunteer Projects in their own country and exchanges volunteers with each other to create an international group of volunteer workers on each project.

For us, becoming an active citizen starts when participating in International Voluntary Service (IVS) short term projects (workcamps), which involve local communities in work with volunteers from different national/cultural/social backgrounds.

### **Alliance educational activities**

Alliance educational activities are coherent to actual priorities of the network and they are based on vision and mission of the network, its annual priorities set during the General Assembly (GA) as well as the current needs of Alliance members.

One of the basic principles of the Alliance is non-formal education. Non-formal education is a way to enable personal growth and social development of the participants and an integral part of what the Alliance does; it is a part of all of the activities as far as its methods are used in participative and evaluative practices. The Alliance considers workcamps as a possible non-formal educational tool through learning by doing approach and learning from each other.

Through all its activities, the Alliance aims to empower young people to accompany them in their intercultural process to develop among them relevant learning opportunities, to contribute to organisational and youth policy development.

The Alliance provides capacity building for its members from IVS technical placement procedures to training and social skills development, external relations, social inclusion/participation, environmental and general sustainability in IVS projects and networking events, quality management, volunteering trends research and policy development on various issues representing the network.

### **About the online learning platform**

For the purpose of the LTTC - Long Term Training Course „Workcamp Studies - Quality education for trainers of youth leaders in the field of International Voluntary Service“, supported by the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe, the Alliance is in the process of developing an online learning platform, a new e-learning tool to support the educational processes, bring a better coherence between the LTTC activities and keep the attention of participants with online courses, completed with self-assessment, discussion groups, individual and group tasks.

Such an innovative tool may complement any future Alliance educational activity, hence reaching more interested individuals and enriching the learning process. For the first time, the Alliance initiates an e-community of learners, in the effort of using current IT tools that do offer great advantages for youth workers and trainers in many contexts. It also gives a greater visibility to international voluntary service and its values.



The online learning platform will consist of:

- Individual courses grouped within a specific field;
- Tests of knowledge after a course has been completed;
- Online generated certificate after a completion of a course;
- Interactive forum for registered participants to follow while being subscribed to a certain course;
- Individual profiles for registered participants; authors of online courses too can have their profiles visible, with their references and experiences in the specific field;
- Simple real-time statistics, providing info on current number of subscribers, number of completed courses, tests taken and finished successfully etc.

## About the online courses in the context of LTTC

MAIN AIM OF LTTC: Increase the quality of education of members' trainers of workcamp leaders - understanding, designing, implementing and evaluating workcamps as structured methodological and pedagogical tools of non formal education, especially focusing on environmental sustainability of workcamps, but not limited to.

### Workcamps as methodological tools

Workcamps, apart from being volunteering activities primarily addressing local communities' needs since 1924, are also tools for building up social and organisational skills of young people. However, it is not enough to bring 15 people from different countries together to call the activity a workcamp. A workcamp as a methodological tool implies that the workcamp leader needs to structure the project so it is more likely for learning to happen. For example, the leader needs to think about:

- Participants in a workcamp to be from different countries, gender balanced; to be well prepared for what they are coming to;
- For work in the local community to have meaning, to include study part, meeting with local experts for the problem the volunteers are trying to solve;
- To have well organised after-work, including teambuilding activities, task division among volunteers, educative excursions, intercultural evenings etc;
- To allow enough quality contacts with the local community, so to meet the local culture in a non-touristic way, with respect to local realities: meeting with local entrepreneurs, speaking with the locals about their problems, organising common events etc;
- To facilitate discussions about the culture of peace, about environmental awareness and other topics of interest to the member organisation and the Alliance, etc.

**The target group of LTTC (consequently, for online courses as well, at this stage) are** trainers of workcamp leaders. Having this in mind, here are some possible topics for online courses, with ideas on possible lessons, but the ideas are not limited to these only:

**Course 1: Trainers in NFE – the basics.** Ideas for possible lessons:

- non formal learning and nfe methodology;
- understanding and facilitating individual and group learning processes;
- designing educational programmes;
- co-operating in an (international) team of trainers/facilitators.

**Course 2: Alliance – structure, policies, tools.** Ideas for possible lessons:

- Principles: volunteering, participation, mobility, social inclusion, environmental sustainability and non-formal education
- Procedures: placement, becoming a member, partner, guest
- Quality Charter
- Newcomers training
- Recognising volunteering in social skills development: what are competencies gained through



volunteering (comparative study from I'VE, RIVER); skills for better employability and active participation;  
*This can be a field for itself.*

- Basics of volunteering – how do we understand it

### Course 3: How to organise a workcamp

- IVS history
- Organisation of workcamps – step by step (from a point of view of a camp leader and the local organiser)
- Workcamps and cross-cultural communication and learning
- Workcamps and teambuilding
- Workcamps and leadership skills
- Workcamps and safety/risk assessment
- Workcamps and environmental sustainability
- Workcamps and social inclusion
- Workcamps and gender issues
- Conflict prevention and management in the context of workcamps

### Course 4: How to effectively use social media in promoting IVS projects – tips and tricks

There is no agreed length of a course. Generally, 5 to 10 lessons, depending on the topic is enough.

All the lessons are uploaded and immediately online on the platform. Authors should be available to follow up discussions with the subscribers, e.g. a course is open for a duration of 2-4 weeks during which author(s) follow up the interactive learning process. The course may be online all the time, but be interactive only in agreed time frames.

A test, where indicated, should be designed for the end, made of at least 10-15 questions.

A part for additional documents for further reading should be available, with e-books, links, manuals etc.

Lessons may consist of text, photos, videos, links, ppt, prezi. All sources must be adequately marked and further listed in the bibliography. Examples should be dominant in lessons, preferable from Alliance member organisations, as a way of recognising good practices.

## Who can be an author of an Alliance online course?

Priority is given to the trainers in the Alliance Pool of Trainers, but any representative from an Alliance member organisation with relevant experience in the field as well as in developing educational modules is welcome to apply. Authors can be also a group of people that can cooperate and develop a common module in a cooperative way. This way a working group or a committee could develop a chapter (e.g. the one about sustainability).

## What else do one needs to know before applying?

Being an author of Alliance online courses is a voluntary and honorary position. The online platform should represent the pool of collective knowledge of the network, providing recognition to IVS movement, the Alliance and good practices of its member, partner and guest organisations. It gives as well a high recognition to its authors, as the platform allows space for presenting profiles of authors and their references.

## How to apply?

In order to apply, one should send to the [vicepresident@alliance-network.eu](mailto:vicepresident@alliance-network.eu) by 10th of March:

- Support letter from an Alliance member organisation, signed and stamped;
- CV showing relevant experience;



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- questionnaire

**By the 15th of March** the final structure of online courses will be defined among the proposed topics of the candidates. The selection will be made in consultation among the Executive Committee, Alliance Course Director, and the Training Needs Working Group.

The authors should have the material ready to be uploaded **by the 15th of April** and the beginning of the Training for Trainers (the second residential event of the LTTC – Italy, 20<sup>th</sup> of April). There is a period between 15<sup>th</sup> of April and the 10<sup>th</sup> of May the web developers are available to the Alliance to fix any bugs in the courses – the authors should be available to report any bugs they notice while uploading the content.

The authors will have the support of the Alliance Course Director, the LTTC trainers' team and the Alliance Vicepresident while developing the content, so for the content to follow the learning curve of the LTTC participants.

Looking forward to receiving your application!

Alliance Executive Committee and the Alliance Course Director