

Alliance Quality Charter

The Alliance Quality Charter has been produced as a target to which all organisations working in the field of international voluntary service should aim. This Quality Charter sets the standards of our work together, thus enriching the experiences for all those involved: the volunteers, the hosting communities and the hosting and sending organisations. This document should be a standard benchmark by which organisations can evaluate their work together and therefore strengthen their partnerships.

For Alliance members, partners and guests those standards are binding. Priority should be given to the cooperation among members, partners and guests of the Alliance.

1. Volunteers' Rights & Responsibilities

1.1 Rights:

1.1.1 All volunteers should be informed of: their rights and responsibilities as volunteers; requirements and conditions of their projects; details of the hosting organisations and background to the workcamp movement in general.

1.1.2 Volunteers should be informed of any language requirements, work responsibilities, the number of working hours, type of accommodation and general conditions of the project.

1.1.3 Volunteers should be informed about any significant changes to the project as soon as possible.

1.1.4 Volunteers must be provided with: accommodation (including washing facilities and toilets), and adequate food or budget for it, according to local standards. The group will not be expected to pay any additional fee which was not included in the project description, for their own food/accommodation whilst on a workcamp.

1.1.5 Volunteers must receive all necessary health and safety instructions regarding the work, accommodation, free time activities and transport (if necessary for the project) and be provided with the necessary safety equipment to carry out the work. A first aid kit should be available in the workcamp.

1.1.6 Volunteers have the right to adequate supervision during their project.

1.1.7 Emergency procedures concerning accidents, during or outside the working time, must be explained to volunteers.

1.1.8 Volunteers should have opportunities to express their opinions/concerns on the progress of a workcamp to a responsible person and where possible be included in the decision process.

1.1.9 Volunteers must not replace paid labour or volunteer on a for profit project.

1.1.10 Volunteers have the right to know how their fees that they give to either/both sending or hosting organisations are used.

1.1.11 Volunteers have the right to extra support to facilitate their inclusion on a project, providing this is agreed beforehand with the host.

1.2 Responsibilities:

1.2.1 Volunteers must accept and abide by the rules and conditions of the hosting organisation.

1.2.2 Volunteers should inform themselves of the voluntary movement, the workcamp philosophy and be motivated to take part on the project.

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1.2.3 Volunteers must prepare themselves for the project by reading any information given to them by the sending/hosting organisations.

1.2.4 Volunteers are responsible for arranging and funding their travel (unless they are going on a supported programme), for seeking professional advice on current medical precautions and arranging their visas with the help of their sending organisation.

1.2.5 If the volunteers cancel their place on a project they must inform the sending organisations as soon as possible.

1.2.6 Volunteers are responsible for obtaining adequate insurance, especially when it is not provided by the hosting/sending organisation.

1.2.7 Volunteers should arrive on time and participate for the entire duration of a project.

1.2.8 Volunteers must send any information that has previously been requested to the hosting organisations (e.g. confirmation slips, travel details etc.) and if these change they must inform the host as soon as possible.

1.2.9 Volunteers should be flexible and understand that details of the projects can change at the last minute.

1.2.10 Volunteers must be active participants and support good group dynamics as this is a key to a successful project.

1.2.11 Volunteers are responsible, as a group, for organising their free time activities along with the support of the leader.

1.2.12 Volunteers must obey the laws of the hosting country. They are also responsible for their own behaviour on the project and they should respect the culture and traditions of the local host.

1.2.13 Volunteers must not engage in violent or discriminatory behaviour (e.g. racism, sexism and homophobic behaviour).

1.2.14 Volunteers must inform their sending organisation of any relevant health issues that they might have before they go on a project. This is only applicable if the health issue poses a risk to the volunteer or to other people. This information will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

1.2.15 Volunteers are responsible for providing feedback on their experience to their host and sending organisations.

2. Hosting Organisation's Rights & Responsibilities

2.1 Rights:

2.1.1 Any volunteer not abiding by the agreed rules of the workcamp can be expelled from the workcamp.

2.2 Responsibilities:

2.2.1 Each host organisation must implement and respect the rights of the volunteers (see section 1.1).

2.2.2 It is the responsibility of the hosting organisation to ensure that the host community understands the international and social aspects of a workcamp and is motivated to achieving these in addition to the project work.

2.2.3 Hosting organisations should only accept volunteers from a sending IVS organisation, unless there is no IVS organisation in a particular country and a volunteer applies directly.

2.2.4 If a volunteer is refused a place, the hosting organisation should give a reason (e.g. full workcamp, too many females, etc.)

2.2.5 If a workcamp is cancelled the hosting organisation must propose an alternative workcamp for the volunteers already placed on it. The replacement camp should be as close as possible to the original project in terms of dates, type of work and work location.

2.2.6 Hosting organisations should ensure that all communication regarding placements of volunteers is done efficiently. They must inform sending organisations about any changes regarding the project as soon as they occur.

2.2.7 Hosting organisations should do all they can to ensure a volunteer is issued with a visa when required and they should clearly communicate the visa procedures with the sending organisation.

2.2.8 Detailed information (the 'info sheet') should be available no less than four weeks before a workcamp is due to start. This information should include an emergency telephone number of the hosting organisation. Hosting organisations are recommended to follow the template provided in the Alliance Guidebook.

2.2.9 Hosting organisation will provide adequate food and suitable accommodation.

2.2.10 There should be a trained person (usually a project leader) responsible for each workcamp to supervise the volunteers and ensure its smooth running. They should also ensure that the volunteers are included in decision making.

2.2.11 Hosting organisation must inform sending organisation about any no shows within three days from the start of the workcamp.

2.2.12 Hosting organisation must inform sending organisation if a significant problem (health, safety or wellbeing of a volunteer) occurs on a workcamp or if a volunteer leaves early.

2.2.13 If, during the time of a workcamp, a volunteer is hospitalised then the hosting organisation is responsible for their wellbeing until the volunteer leaves the hosting country.

2.2.14 Hosting organisations are recommended to have insurance for their projects but in the event that this is not possible they must inform the sending organisations and volunteers before the projects begin.

2.2.15 If, during the time of a workcamp, a volunteer has to be repatriated for any reason then the hosting organisation is responsible until the volunteer leaves the project/workcamp.

2.2.16 Hosting organisations must inform all the volunteers about any health and safety instructions regarding the work, accommodation, free time activities and transport (if necessary for the project).

2.2.17 Hosting organisation should inform sending ones about any relevant remark concerning volunteers.

2.2.18 Hosts must provide volunteers with meaningful and not for profit volunteer work.

2.2.19 Hosting organisations are responsible to take into account Alliance policies which include environmental sustainability and social inclusion practices when organizing International Voluntary Service projects.

3. Sending Organisation's Rights & Responsibilities

3.1 Rights:

3.1.1 If any significant accident or incident affecting the health, safety and wellbeing of a volunteer (e.g. hospitalisation/arrest) occurs, the sending organisation has the right to be informed.

3.2 Responsibilities:

3.2.1 Each sending organisation should implement and respect the rights of the volunteers (see section 1.1)

3.2.2 The sending organisations must inform volunteers about the workcamp movement, voluntary service, what they can expect on a workcamp and what is expected of them. They must also be clear on how their projects are funded.

3.2.3 Sending organisations are responsible for providing volunteers with all the necessary information including: preparation/training sessions; handbook; infosheets; contact with past participants, etc.

3.2.4 Sending organisations should only recruit volunteers who are resident in their own country unless there is no sending organisation in a particular country.

3.2.5 The Volunteer Exchange Form (VEF) of each volunteer must be sent to the hosting organisation. It is the responsibility of the sending organisation to submit a completed VEF.

3.2.6 The emergency contact section of the VEF must be filled in and the hosting organisations have the right to refuse a volunteer if it is incomplete. It is the responsibility of the sending organisation to submit a completed VEF.

3.2.7 Sending organisations from countries where a visa is required should inform hosting organisations about visa regulation. Sending organisations should do all they can to ensure a volunteer is issued with a visa when required.

3.2.8 If the sending organisation receives significant or outstanding evaluations about a workcamp they should inform the hosting organisation.

3.2.9 If a volunteer cancels his/her participation the sending organisation must inform the host organisation as soon as possible.

3.2.10 Sending organisations must inform volunteers about the Alliance policies, which include environmental sustainability and social inclusion.