

# CREA T.Y.V.



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

CREATIVE DRAMA FOR TRAINING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS IN INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

# RE-SHAPING MY FUTURE THROUGH VOLUNTEERING



**A GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

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# **RE-SHAPING MY FUTURE THROUGH VOLUNTEERING**

A guide for young people



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**“ VOLUNTEERING  
EXPERIENCE AS A  
ROUTE TO PERSONAL  
DEVELOPMENT OR AS AN  
EMPLOYABILITY ROUTE**

**”**



# INTRODUCTION

Dear reader,

On behalf of the EU project CREA.T.Y.V., described in the box below, we would like to welcome you to a journey on youth volunteering. With this guide, we want to share with you our experience in this field and show you how volunteering can be a resource for young people's personal and professional development.

If you are a young person, this guide will provide you with practical tips on how to become a volunteer and to benefit from your voluntary work to widen your knowledge and foster your skills. As a consortium of organizations working together to provide non-formal learning opportunities for young people, we aim to show you inspirational stories and open volunteering opportunities you can undertake as a young EU citizen. We also want to stress how volunteering can be a way to meet, exchange, and support people belonging to other generations. Finally, we would like to provide you with examples of organizations in the European Union that support youth volunteering, with a focus on three of the four EU countries of the CREA.T.Y.V. consortium: the Czech Republic, Italy and Romania.

Through this guide, we hope to encourage you to become or to keep on being a volunteer, because we believe this is a great opportunity to increase your self-confidence, your skills, knowledge and network. In particular, we hope you will seize volunteering as an opportunity to meet other generations. According to our experience, this would be a great occasion for you to develop new communication and career-related skills, improve attitudes toward people in need, and develop new meaningful relationships and friendships.

After this journey with us, you may undertake a volunteering experience as a route to personal development or as an employability route to gain vital experience for increasing job prospects or access further education. In both cases, we are sure that you will not regret this choice!

Enjoy the reading!

*The CREA.T.Y.V. project team*

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# ABOUT THE CRE.A.T.Y.V. PROJECT

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Funded by the European Commission through the Erasmus+ Program “Strategic Partnerships in the field of Youth”, CREA.T.Y.V aims to provide non-formal learning possibilities for young people (18-25 years old) with fewer opportunities. In particular, it aims to do so through a mentoring and an intergenerational training program in the volunteering field.

Coordinated by Asociatia Habilitas – Resource Center and Professional Development (Romania), the project also includes partners from the following EU countries:

Italy (represented by Anziani e Non Solo)

The Czech Republic (represented by Evropská rozvojová agentura)

Ireland (represented by the Gaiety School of Acting)

Romania (represented not only by the project coordinator, Asociatia Habilitas - Centru de Resurse si Formare Profesionala, but also by Pro Vobis – the National Resource Center for Volunteering)

Our common goal is to create new practices in non-formal youth education field, targeting young people with specific needs, and to promote volunteering, in particular intergenerational volunteering, to different stakeholders, at large scale. Through our work, we want to contribute to a more inclusive society, as well as to increase young people’s employability and social inclusion. In particular, we aim to reach these objectives while increasing intergenerational cooperation opportunities.

## WHAT WILL THE PUBLICATION INCLUDE?

The structure of the guide will include the following modules:

- 1 What is volunteering? How can volunteering help me in my future professional life?
- 2 What can I do as volunteer? Examples from Romania, Italy and the Czech Republic.
- 3 Case studies of young people volunteers who changed their lives through volunteering.
- 4 What is international volunteering? Examples of young people who started their career as international volunteers.
- 5 Presentation of volunteering organizations where young people could volunteer.
- 6 What are my skills - my values - my personal traits? Volunteering for personal development.



# **CALL FOR ACTION!**

**DO YOU HAVE SKILLS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE OR TO IMPROVE? DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE HOBBY OR A PASSION THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH OTHERS OR TO START TO WORK ON? THERE ARE COUNTLESS WAYS IN WHICH TO VOLUNTEER: CHANCES ARE IF YOU HAVE A SKILL OR A HOBBY, THAT THERE IS A WAY TO SHARE YOUR PASSION WITH OTHERS THROUGH VOLUNTEERING**



# WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING?

**Volunteering is a great way of contributing to society, in your own country or abroad, while developing new skills and making new friends.**

The concept of volunteering is understood differently across the EU. However, it has some common features:

- Carried out of a person's own free-will;
- Without concern of financial gain;
- Benefits the individual volunteer, communities and society;
- Often carried out in support of non-profit organizations or community-based initiative;
- Refers to all kind of voluntary activity, formal or informal;
- Does not replace professional, paid employment.



## YOUNG PEOPLE AND VOLUNTEERING

A recent EU [survey](#) found that around a quarter (25%) of young adults in the EU had been involved in an organised voluntary activity in the last 12 months. At the individual country level, the highest proportions of young people who had volunteered were found in Slovenia, Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands. In Poland, Greece and Hungary, roughly one in six of young people had been involved in such a voluntary activity.

According to the project's experience, volunteering provides young people with strong feelings, such as:

- Satisfaction to help other people
- Self-esteem and self-awareness
- Sense of achievement, pride and enjoyment
- Friendship relationships

Volunteering also offers them new personal, professional, social, and learning opportunities.

Therefore, we aim to use this guide as a way to increase the number of young people committing to volunteering!

## TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITIES

Volunteering activities can vary according to:

### 1 YOUR SKILLS AND INTERESTS

Volunteering activities can include everything from befriending to painting the fences of a school or a home care! To start with, you can find below a list of popular volunteering activities:

- **Befriending/caring activities** Volunteers can provide support and friendship to a person who has special needs, or may be going through a difficult period, or is adjusting to a major change in their life. Volunteers can also look after animals, like cats and dogs.
- **Administrative/Office Work** Volunteers can assist an organization with its office administration by carrying out reception duties, typing and making pieces of research. They can also help out at busy times with campaigning or fundraising activities.

■ **Arts** There are lots of amazing ways to volunteer in the arts. For example, volunteers can work as a teacher or a coach, as well as to carry out some art work for a school, an organization or a home care.

■ **Events and Stewarding** Events and stewarding volunteers are often the face of many festivals, awareness raising events and community gatherings. They welcome attendees, they ensure events run smoothly, and contribute to the event's promotion.

■ **Awareness raising activities** Volunteers can help an organisation raise awareness on a specific issue, such as protecting the environment, by organising awareness raising activities.

■ **Outdoor Activities/Coaching** For those who love the outdoors, volunteering can also be a way to supervise and/or coach participants in a host of sporting/outdoor activities.

## 2 YOUR INTERESTS

The most popular sectors where people volunteer are:

- Social care
- Health
- Culture, sport, recreational activities
- Environmental safeguard
- Rights protection
- International cooperation
- Research and education
- Volunteering promotion
- Economic development and social cohesion
- Religion

## 3 YOUR AVAILABILITIES

According to the time and the profile volunteers have, they can be:

■ **Occasional Volunteers.** For example, they can contribute to a summer projects or support the organization of an event.

■ **Regular Volunteers.** For example, they can undertake regular work for an organization a certain number of hours per week.

■ **Specific volunteers.** For example, they can be the president of an organization or play another position of responsibility in an organization. In this case, volunteers have usually been elected and/or recruited according to their skills, interests, and experience.

# A SPECIAL TYPOLOGY OF VOLUNTEERING: INTERGENERATIONAL VOLUNTEERING



There is a special typology of volunteering we would like to promote through this box: intergenerational volunteering. Intergenerational volunteering is when young and old volunteers take part in common activities, programs and projects. Sometimes, it happens informally, and it allows bringing generations together.

With this guide, we encourage our young readers to undertake intergenerational volunteering activities, because we believe that dialogue and interactions opportunities between generations are very important. When they are lacking, young and older people lose the possibility to share common reference points to interpret and understand reality and values to orientate their actions. Without intergenerational exchanges, the whole social cohesion of a society is called into question. Intergenerational volunteering aims to tackle this eventuality and restore a relationship that can provide reciprocal advantages.

Research shows that when generations come together everyone benefits, children and youth, older adults and the community too. On the young people side, volunteering has many benefits including developing skills, values, and a sense of empowerment, self-esteem and citizenship. Interacting with older adults enables youth to develop social networks, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, sense of efficacy and trust and positive attitudes towards aging. It also decreases negative behaviours.

**Intergenerational volunteering opportunities bring together the experiences and resources of the older generations with the energy and potential of the younger ones, thus creating a benefit for the society as a whole.**

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**HELP YOU DEVELOP THE  
RIGHT SKILLS TO FIND THE  
JOB YOU ARE LOOKING FOR**

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# HOW CAN VOLUNTEERING SUPPORT MY FUTURE PROFESSIONAL LIFE?

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Through volunteering, you can learn a wide variety of new skills, among which:

## COMMUNICATION AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Speaking with people of different backgrounds and ages

Presenting your point of view in front of others

Listening to other people needs and requests

Learning creative communication tools

Being assertive

## NETWORKING

Building new relationships

Deepening existing relationships

Establishing new networks

Consulting groups or networks

Liaising with other organisations & individuals

Chairing or actively participating in meetings

Working in a team

## LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Coordinating a group

Facilitating the input of a participant in a meeting or of partners in a project

## MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Support and supervision

Coordinating projects

Managing through influence

Managing volunteers

Planning

## EVENTS COORDINATION

Workshops/seminars/conferences

Planning

Identifying participants

Booking venues

Follow-on activities

## RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

- Resource development
- Information materials development
- Educational tools and materials
- Collation of existing information
- Managing the input of others (designers, printers etc.)

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Media and social media
- Marketing
- Writing articles and newsletters
- Information dissemination

## OTHER

- Working independently
- Setting your priorities
- Managing your time and being punctual
- Developing IT skills

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- Strategic planning
- Training needs analysis
- Design
- Implementation
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Training Promotion
- Accreditation

**ACCORDING TO YOUR  
PASSIONS, THESE SKILLS  
CAN ALSO HELP YOU  
DEVELOP THE RIGHT SKILLS  
TO FIND THE JOB YOU ARE  
LOOKING FOR.**



# FOSTERING YOUR VALUES THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering not only allows you to acquire and develop new skills to employ in your professional career. It also allows you to better know yourself and foster your values and identity.

Through volunteering, you can also further develop your confidence and capacity, while contributing to build a positive self-image. Meeting new people and building a network while being valued in the community is a major bonus of volunteering.

Moreover, volunteering allows you to engage in new activities you have not tried yet, but in a fun and enjoyable atmosphere. It gives you the opportunity to listen and spend quality time with new persons and make a positive contribution to their lives.

**Finally, volunteering can be a great opportunity to:**

Help others

Be an active part of the community

Contribute to common causes

Contribute to global challenges, such as climate change or the eradication of poverty

Learn new cultures and languages

Open your mind to something unknown and discover the world

**Find out more reasons why volunteering can help you by reading the stories of the young volunteers in the next chapter!**

# WHAT DO VOLUNTEERS THINK?



*"Feeling worthy, taking responsibilities, making an effort to help: the key elements of my volunteering experience. Volunteering helped me understand how rewarding it can be to make an effort to help other people. It also helped me break stereotypes on older persons and persons with disability. This is the reason why I keep on volunteering during the summer." Andrea, 17 years old, Centro Vicentino di solidarietà CE.I.S., Italy*

*"Having being surrounded by people with the same purpose and having had the freedom to choose the activities to carry out helped me increase my self-confidence. I learned how to be flexible, how to accept other people's opinions and how to work in a team. As a volunteer, I have been involved in different types of activities: I organized events, I was Doctor Clown for children in the hospital, I painted children's rooms in the hospital and I got involved in organizing various film and music festivals. All of this built up the person I am today and helped me choose my career path." Maria, 19 years old volunteer (event planner) for the Cluj-Napoca Volunteer Centre, Romania*

*"Volunteering gave me a lot of chances to try out my ideas in practice and to immediately see what works and what could have been done differently. It allowed me to gain self-confidence and believe in myself. It made me more aware of my skills and competences. I stopped being scared - of risks, of uncertainty, of living in a foreign country. When I was looking for my first job, the volunteering experiences I had were even more important to my employer than my education." Daniela Hrušková, 27 years old, AFC, Czech Republic*

*"I fell in love with TIFF on the first day. Six years later, because of my volunteering experience and the passion for cinema I became Executive Manager of the Festival, leading a team of 250 employees and 400 volunteers." Cristian, 20 years old volunteer for Transylvania International Film Festival, Romania*

*"Volunteering means offering your smile to those who are close to you and help them in a challenging moment of their lives. Volunteering means giving without asking anything in return. Volunteering makes me feel a better person and improves my self-esteem. It also helps me learn from anybody, regardless their age, gender, and disabilities." Luca, 19 years old, Protezione Civile di Noicattaro, Italy*





*"This experience as a volunteer helped me when I applied for jobs. Being used to interact with different kinds of people and being involved in so many different activities made me feel confident and stress-free during my job interviews. When I started working, it was quite easy for me to integrate in teams and to get to know my colleagues. When I was appointed team leader I was surprised about how easy it was for me to communicate efficiently with my team and our clients, to coordinate the projects and my colleagues, to keep track of and meet the deadlines. I applied at my job all what I learned in my volunteering experience! Volunteering gives you perfect context to try out things safely, to experiment as much as possible, to discover what you really want to do and if you are good at it or not." Anca Cristian, she was 16 years old when she volunteered for CVCN - Centrul de Voluntariat Cluj-Napoca, Romania*

*"I help persons with disability to express their selves through the theatre. Every year, we put on a theatrical production at the beginning of the summer and we raise funds for the year after. This experience has taught me respect for others and to experience empathy." Sonia, 18 years old, Gruppo "Invincible", Italy*

*"What does volunteering give me? It gave me the chance to work with two children from socially disadvantaged environment and become their older friend, sister, and advisor. It gives me the good feeling to do something for other people. The ten days per year I spend at the Pět P camp for kids are the most exhausting of the year. However, they make me meet kids who are not accepted to any other "conventional" camp. When I see their happiness I know that it is worth it and I am always looking forward to the next year immediately after I come back home." Andrea, volunteer for the Pět P program of Hestia, Czech Republic*

*"What is more beautiful in life than helping others? I started volunteering in high school and since then I got involved in many projects. Now I have just returned from my latest volunteering expedition that took place in Nepal. I went there with a medical and educational team from Volunteers for Life to bring back the smiles on young Nepalese kids, from rural and urban areas. I want to encourage everybody to volunteer, regardless of the field of activity they get involved in. Give from what you have received!" Andrei, Volunteers for Life, Romania*

*"I received many intensive trainings and attended numerous seminars mostly focused on personal development. I also delivered some of them myself. Later on, when I was looking for a job, I saw how helpful my experience at Think Big was. Thanks to the skills I acquires as a volunteer, I was offered a position of a project manager in the municipality." Jana Stará, Think Big Programme, Czech Republic*







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**THE OPPORTUNITIES  
TO VOLUNTEER VARY A  
LOT FROM COUNTRY TO  
COUNTRY**

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# VOLUNTEERING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC, ITALY, OR ROMANIA

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The opportunities to volunteer vary a lot from country to country. Here you can find an overview of the volunteering possibilities in the Czech Republic, Italy, and Romania.

## THE CZECH REPUBLIC

There are multiple volunteering opportunities in the Czech Republic. Everybody can choose what is more suitable and meaningful. The options include work with children/seniors/ homeless persons, cultural volunteering, communication projects, events' organization. Those who want to help those in danger can also volunteer as firemen.

It is also very popular to volunteer abroad. There are several organizations offering this kind of volunteering opportunities. The most popular ones are: Hestia, AFS, Člověk v tísni, Charity of the Czech Republic, Armáda spásy, Červený kříž, Cesta domů (private home care for terminally ill people and support to their families), TOTEM (intergenerational experience). There are also Czech branches of internationally recognized organizations such as Greenpeace, Amnesty International, UNICEF, AIESEC, ADRA, and many others.

## ITALY

In Italy, there are different infrastructures where you can look for volunteering options: volunteer centers, web portals and platforms, information events. You can also directly contact the organization or association where you would like to volunteer.

If you are looking for an intergenerational activity, there are also several opportunities for young and older people to carry out volunteering activities together. However, when we speak about intergenerational volunteering, it is more common think about initiatives where young volunteers support fragile elderly people or adult/old volunteers help young people in need. Sometimes, there are also volunteering opportunities where old volunteers become mentors who support young volunteers.

## ROMANIA

Romania offers also a multitude of volunteering opportunities, both in public and private organizations. Young people can volunteer in organizations that offer educational services or which focus on disadvantaged persons, ecologic, cultural or sports organizations. There are well-known organizations activating in Romania (such as Save the Children, Caritas, the National Organization of Romanian Scouts, Hope and Homes for Children, UNICEF, Greenpeace, Red Cross etc.), but also smaller organizations that work effectively with volunteers. The dimension of international volunteering is present in the form of European volunteering projects in which young people can engage, implemented by various Romanian organizations.



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# EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

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## INTERGENERATIONAL CIVIL EDUCATION

*(the Czech Republic)*

Taking part in a project as a volunteer can be a way to meet other generations. The people taking part in the Intergenerational Civil Education (ICE) project are an example!

This project, funded by the South Moravian Region from 2014 to 2016, aimed to engage people from different generations in the Czech policy debate. It also wanted to promote mutual understanding of political views across generations. By involving 64 people aged 10-76, the project increased the interest, especially among young people, in politics by organizing intergenerational workshops.

Through intergenerational workshops, young volunteers had the chance to exchange their views with older volunteers. Through the project, people belonging to different generations got inspired, while having a dialogue and an exchange together, to actively engage to and influence public affairs. During the workshops, young and old people had to look for political partners across age groups. This helped participants realize that they can agree with the other ones despite their age. Thanks to the involvement of civic activists, participants were encouraged to be active citizens, thus improving the local political culture.

## ORGANIZATIA NATIONALA CERCETASII ROMANIEI (NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF ROMANIAN SCOUTS) AND OTHER RELEVANT NGOS WHERE YOU CAN VOLUNTEER



ONCR allows volunteer to contribute to young people's civic engagement. The mission of the scouts is to contribute to the development of children and young people by helping them achieve their physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual fulfillment, as well as to become responsible citizens of local, national and international communities. The volunteers' role is to give a training program for children aged 7 to 24.

Picture from the last camp of the ONCR (for info contact [www.scout.ro](http://www.scout.ro))

## THE PROJECT “GENERATIONS – COMMUNITY CENTER”



Fundatia Principesa Margareta a Romaniei activities

Another good example on how volunteering can help younger people to meet and exchange with other generations is represented by the project “Generations – Community Center”. Funded by Fundatia Principesa Margareta a Romaniei, the project involved 24 older people and 63 high school students in intergenerational activities.

The project helps primary and secondary school children from poor families, aged between 7 and 14 years old, to improve their school results and to be better included in society by providing children with an after-school program with old volunteers. Older volunteers provide them with support for the homework, as well as a wide range of activities, from craft workshops to creative activities. The exchanges happen weekly. So far, the intergenerational activities included painting clubs, folk dances, interactive songs, practical activities, manual work, gardening, cooking, and outdoor trips.

Among the activities, we have the “musical encounter”, that allowed older and younger generations to sing together, and the gardening day, when old volunteers gave gardening lessons to the younger generations. During the initiative “October in common”, people from different generations cooked together and learned how to make donuts.

Moreover, **Fundatia Principesa Margareta a Romaniei** ([www.fpmr.ro](http://www.fpmr.ro)) enables young volunteers to contribute to create sustainable and autonomous communities. In particular, volunteers can be involved in socio-educational and leisure activities with the beneficiaries in the projects. They can also do social assistance activities and be involved in fundraising/communication campaigns.

Finally, **Asociatia FDP - Protagonisti in educatie** ([www.fdpstr.ro](http://www.fdpstr.ro)) and **Asociatia Lindenfeld - Educational Program AJUNGEM MARI** ([www.ajungemmari.ro](http://www.ajungemmari.ro)) are two organisations where young people can volunteer to support people at risk. In the first one, volunteers' roles is to participate in tutoring lab, meetings, sports events according to the availability of time and professional training under the guidance of the project coordinator. In the second one, volunteers help children in need through workshops, socio-recreational activities in order to empower the children and give them more responsibility.



‘Ajungem Mari’ Educational Program

## AVO (IN ITALY)

Many non-profit and civil society organizations also offer the opportunity to meet other generations through volunteering experiences. AVO (Associazione Volontari Ospedalieri onlus), is one of the organizations which allows you to work in the hospital as volunteer, together with other age groups. It can provide a wide range of volunteering opportunities for those wishing to help patients and their families. In particular, volunteers can be involved in the coordination and delivery of the following services:

- Support to the patients (possibility to speak and have support from the volunteers)
- Support to the family of the patients
- Information on the hospital services
- Awareness raising activities to promote a solidarity culture

**Those wishing to become a volunteer for the organization need to:**

- Have an interview with the AVO staff
- Attend a training course
- Attend a traineeship where another volunteer helps the candidate develop the needed skills

Thanks to the traineeships, the courses and the presence of an intergenerational staff, the organization provides volunteers with plenty of occasions to meet and learn from volunteers belonging to other generations. Intergenerational exchanges are particularly frequent when young volunteers start their experience with AVO and need to learn from peers. Finally, the fact that volunteers are trained regularly allows the AVO staff to acquire strong communication and the interpersonal skills, as well as technical ones.

## THE GENERAL DIRECTION OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AND CHILD PROTECTION (DGASPC) SECTOR 4, BUCHAREST (IN ROMANIA)



Contact: Seniors Club - DGASPC  
Sector 4 (clubul.seniorilor@dgaspc4.  
ro/+40372.710.551)

The institution is developing the project "Volunteer Grandparents", in collaboration with the "Inima Copiilor" Association – the project "Not a single child in hospital": the seniors, beneficiaries of the Seniors Club Sector 4, subordinated to DGASPC sector 4, provide affective and emotional support to abandoned children with serious health problems, admitted to the Children's Emergency Clinical Hospital "Maria Sklodowska Curie" – Budimex, Department of Neonatology. Seniors spend 2-3 hours a day with children in the department, this activity with psychic benefits for both categories involved. Lack of human touch, on the medium and long term, studies show



that these babies are experiencing a delay in development and increasing their hospitalization by up to 50% compared to other children who have their parents next to them. Approximately 40 elderly people from the Seniors Club Sector 4 have enrolled in this volunteer program, taking part in courses organized by Dr. Cristian Cîrstoveanu, head of the New-born Intensive Care Unit at the hospital, where they were trained on hygiene- sanitary rules in the hospital and learned to manipulate babies using a didactic doll. Seniors had tears in their eyes, memories came to them, many smiles and an ocean of happiness accompanied these activities, and mobilization has been exemplary to help newborns who stay for months in the hospital or who have been abandoned by their parents because of serious health problems. Through the volunteering that DGASPC Sector 4 has initiated for this project, the seniors offer a touch, comfort, nurture, embrace them, and sing to the distressed babies, because every day the little ones go through painful maneuvers such as intubation, aspiration, infusion, change of dressing, injections, branching or analysis.

„When I took the newborn in my arms and felt her heart beating in tandem with mine, I was overwhelmed. Meanwhile, I gave up my heart medications, I regulate my tension on these helpless angels, “said Maria, a member of the Seniors Club.

This program enjoyed a real success, with more than 1,000 people wishing to register as volunteers in the hospital, following the popularization of the DGASPC Sector 4 project.

## FUNDATIA DE SPRIJIN COMUNITAR

(The Community Support Foundation) (FSC) (Bacau, Romania) implements the following intergenerational activities:

1

### “THE GRANDPARENTS' SUMMER SCHOOL”

This project is designed for the older people of the Speranta day care center for the older people and aims to exchange information and expertise in various fields between generations. Every day, FSC volunteers (pupils and students) organize different club activities for the Center beneficiaries. The clubs are: Aerobics and Dance, IT Club (browsing various social networks, world, excel, etc.), Foreign Language Club (English / French), Karaoke Club and Gastronomy Club. These clubs are coordinated by both young volunteers and older people volunteers, each generation presenting its own expertise. The number of participants varies. The average number of the club's participants is 20.



## 2 VOLUNTEERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

The FSC runs home care services for the older people in over 10 community centers in the county. In this respect, they identified volunteers between the ages of 15-60 in each village that help those immobilized to various household chores: they bring water, cut wood, and feed the beneficiaries. Most of them prefer to do “informal volunteering,” they refuse to complete reports or other type of documents. At this time, there are over 30 volunteers involved in this project.





# **CASE STUDIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE VOLUNTEERS WHO CHANGED THEIR LIVES THROUGH VOLUNTEERING**

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE REAL-LIFE STORIES OF YOUNG  
PEOPLE LIKE YOU WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED WHAT IT IS LIKE  
TO VOLUNTEER!**



## **STELIAN (ROMANIA) BECAME A VOLUNTEER AT THE AGE OF 22**

"I became a volunteer during my first year of the college. I now have over 10 years' experience as a volunteer. All this time I have been involved in many fields of activity, in Cluj-Napoca as well as Bucharest. My varied roles helped deal with health, animal protection, non-formal education, vulnerable people, humanitarian aid, culture. In the 13 organizations I have been part of, I chose to be involved in the administrative area. From copying documents to connecting partners, patients, event planning and organizing, promotion and preparation of needed materials for a great number of public events, each role, task and person I worked with taught me valuable competences such as: event planning, volunteer management, team communication, and so on. The experience accumulated helped me develop professionally as well as personally. Volunteering built up my self-esteem and gave me the courage to express myself freely."



## **JANA (CZECH REPUBLIC) BECAME A VOLUNTEER AT THE AGE OF 23**

Jana was a student at the University of Tomáš Baťa, when she participated in the project Celé Česko and undertook volunteering activities for kids in Hospital of Zlín. Jana found out about these activities throughout her university studies. She was looking for activities in educational and social fields in order to obtain some practical experience with kids.

"I am convinced that kids at hospital are recovering and forgetting about their health issues."

"Through volunteering, my goal was to put all the practical information from reading to kids in hospital in my research work and reveal know-how for the future successors. This experience made me decide to take part later in volunteering with elderly people."

During her studies at the university, Jana also participated, together with her friends, in the project ThinkBig. Her motivation was mainly to realize her and her friend's ideas into practice, as was marking of the trails. Participating and organizing the project has brought her a feeling of good job, also she met new people, gained self-esteem and started think more about things. After finishing the project, Jana used her obtained skills from volunteering. She became ambassador of the project, she also took part in its further organization and held workshops about project management for high school's students. Volunteering is according to Jana beneficial for future profession.



## **CHIARA (ITALY) IS A 20-YEAR-OLD VOLUNTEER OF THE ITALIAN RED CROSS**

Chiara's ideas are clear: she wants to devote her free time to help those in need.

"I have been volunteering since 3 years for the Italian Red Cross Committee (CRI) of Giaveno. I was one of the youngest of the group. As soon as I ended my course, I started working in a local summer camp and the campaign was about prevention of risks due to heat. I mainly worked with children and elderly people.

During this experience, I took a course for being a specialized worker in risks reduction caused by disasters. For me is essential to keep abreast in order to be as helpful as possible.

She is involved in many activities, such as in the distribution of food packages:

"Since December 2014 we have delivered food to several persons in need. We have prepared the food boxes and, with the help of the social services, the boxes have been regularly delivered to the persons that the Red Cross helps."

Chiara is also actively involved in activities aiming at supporting migrants' social inclusion: "During last summer, before the beginning of the school, I helped migrants learn Italian."

"When I have spare time, I dedicate it to the Red Cross and it makes me happy. Volunteering

means to dedicate yourself to others and it helps me grow as a person. I met new people and we created a strong friendship. Volunteering is a serious matter to me. If you face it positively, it opens new horizons to you. It is a long path in which you keep on learning. Volunteering is also about exchanging: on one hand, I help for free, but on the other hand I receive something special from people from all generations. This is the reason I encourage other young people like me to start a volunteering experience.

## **MARIUS (ROMANIA) WAS 23 YEARS OLD WHEN HE VOLUNTEERED FOR THE FIRST TIME**

“The first flight I took coincided with my first trip outside Romania. I participated in the World Wide Village project, coordinated and implemented by Politistiko Ergastiri Agion Omologiton Association, in Cyprus.

The project lasted one month and it was located in a few villages of the island: Lysos, Steni and Peristerona. As an EVS volunteer, I was provided with transportation from my country and back, accommodation, meals (once a day, the meal was offered by the locals), as well as 250 euro as pocket money.

The activities of the project mainly concerned agriculture. I had the pleasure to help the local people in picking carobs, almonds, oranges, and other agricultural activities.

This project gave me the chance to develop social, personal and professional skills and, at the same time, to contribute to society. Cultural awareness, diversity and tolerance are key competencies I have developed in Cyprus.

Even more, a project can be the way to the wonderful Erasmus world, a world of personal development through various European projects. In order for life to change completely, you only need to make the first step towards taking on a challenge.”



## **ANETA (THE CZECH REPUBLIC) IS A VOLUNTEER ATTENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST BOHEMIA IN PLZEŇ**

As a volunteer, she participated in a project focusing on seniors' well-being. The project aimed at encouraging young people to help nurses and other workers in older people homes.

“I think that volunteering is good for young people and their experience for future job. For me, volunteering is an act where one takes a piece of his life, his free time, and that bit, even if he does weekly, devotes himself to someone else without having any profit, money.”

## **STEFANO (ITALY) IS A 21-YEAR-OLD VOLUNTEER**

Stefano has been working for AVO (Padova) since he was 18 years old. In particular, he deals with the fundraising activities in public spaces.

“My goal is to help patients in the hospital, especially children. The reason is that when I was young I was in a hospital for a long time. Now that I am an adult, I want to make a difference! I decided to be a volunteer in the Pediatric Surgery Department.

I work as volunteer one afternoon per week. Together with two colleagues, we make patients laugh with balloons, bubbles, color pens and playing cards. It is funny for the kids and at the same time we offer a break for the parents.”

He says that before being a volunteer he had to do a training course and he was called for an interview with AVO medical staff.

“From my point of view, the training was very useful in order to be ready for the volunteering experience. It helped me not only for the experience in the hospital, but also for my personal life. I learnt what ‘professional distance’ means when you deal with a patient. During my experience as a volunteer, I developed the sense of empathy with the young patients and I spent with them happy moments. It was helpful because now I know how to work with my colleagues and I improved my communication skills. Volunteering means to me being helpful and tackling the everyday challenges with a smile. If you want to be a volunteer, you have to adapt yourself to different situations and people. The important is to give your time to the patient, as well as to share with them your experience, and passion, thus making the difference.”



## **IOANA BUDI (ROMANIA) WAS 19 YEARS OLD WHEN SHE STARTED VOLUNTEERING**

“When I started, I was a young girl who just graduated and had no idea what to do with my life. I guess most young people are familiar with this thought. This is when I discovered the opportunity to go to Norway as an EVS volunteer in the Volda kyrkjelege fellesråd project.

Choosing to go there was one of my best decisions in my life. EVS is a unique experience that gives you a wider perspective on life and opens a lot of doors for your future.

Taking part in such a thing helped me become more open when it comes to people. It taught me to deal with different things. It brought me a lot of friends with whom I am still in touch and the most important thing it taught me how to be responsible, to always trust myself and that communication is the key to everything. These are things that I have never valued and considered before.

This experience had a huge impact on me. It shaped me, even changed me in some cases (of course for the better) and it formed me for the future, personally as well as professionally. I mean, in my opinion this is what we live for, to always learn new things about what is around us and about us, don't we? There's always room for some new experiences and some adventures, we just need to accept that. Before volunteering I would never thought that one day I will think this way, because my view about life was limited but here it is, a better version of me, the version after the volunteering.”



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# WHAT IS INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING?

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Volunteering can also be a chance to travel and live outside your home country, and offer your time and efforts to other communities. In this case, we speak about international volunteering opportunities.

International volunteering is a broad term which is used to capture skilled placements as well as short term roles, sometimes during the summer that can be requested by governments, NGOs, travel agents and other stakeholders. International volunteering opportunities can take place in various sectors. For example, they can relate to environmental education, language teaching, childcare, healthcare, development cooperation, and many other topics. Moreover, they can take place in a wide range of countries. Volunteers can decide to teach in rural schools in Thailand, work with children or older people in India, work on a development cooperation program in Senegal, or undertake many other options.

**Volunteering in another country is a great way to experience different cultures and make new friends, whilst also helping others and learning new skills that could be helpful in later life, both personally and professionally.**

**Here you can find more information about the different types of international volunteering experiences and read inspiring stories from previous young volunteers!**

## Examples of young people who started their career as international volunteers.

Find out the real-life stories of young people who volunteered abroad!



### ERIKA (ITALY) VOLUNTEERS IN A CENTRE FOR OLDER PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

Erika is from Torino and she tells something about her experience: "It is a worthwhile experience!". In September 2014 she decided to go to Almeria, Spain. She was helped by the European Voluntary Service (EVS) Office of Torino.

*"I was so excited to begin this experience, but at the same time I was scared because I had to leave my city for the first time.*

My first months were difficult because I did not know the language and I had to get used to live with other EVS volunteers. In addition, I have never worked with people with disability before, so I was helped by my colleagues and I learnt a lot. In the nine months as a volunteer, I did a lot of extra things, such as visiting Granada and Sevilla, as well as meeting new people from different countries.

The EVS was very helpful in order to grow and get better as a person. Thanks to this experience abroad as a volunteer, I learnt to adapt myself to different places and people. I met new people and now I can interact with the older people with whom I created a strong relation. I suggest this EVS experience to everyone because it is something that enriches and helps you to tackle also work challenges."



### ADELA (ROMANIA) BECAME A VOLUNTEER WHEN SHE WAS 15 YEARS OLD

"I started volunteering for various organizations and local communities at a very young age, when I was 15. I did my EVS much later, when I was 27 and I was trying to take a break in my professional life, before starting something new. It has been a great experience and the perfect balance for a sabbatical year, between free time and remaining active and helping out local communities carrying out with their work.

I did my EVS in northern Italy, in a very small town in Brescia province called Chiari. I started in November 2014, and it ended in August 2015. My year in Italy was financed by the European Commission that covered transportation, accommodation, meals, costs of activities, insurance and pocket money we received during the volunteering stage.

I worked in a small town, carrying out educational and social activities for children and young people together with 5 other volunteers and many other dedicated local teachers and social workers. It



was mainly an afterschool and weekend activities, as well as a complex summer school program that would last for 7 weeks during the months of June and August. Outside “work hours” I got to spend a lot of time with a bunch of people coming from the most various countries and cultures - on one hand, there were the locals but I also met Armenians, Germans, Lithuanians and Russians. It was such a great and refreshing learning experience.

Living for almost a year abroad within a local community makes you more aware of what is really happening there, ways in which you can be more involved, but also gives access to a knowledge of yourself, that you wouldn't get by any other means. It taught me independence, reliability, respect for my own work and the work of others; on how to confront or avoid obstacles - and most important, it helped me make big decisions involving my life and the life of others, who depended on my work.

When I left home, I wanted to improve my foreign languages skills (English and most important Italian) and I also wanted to expand my experience in international communities. My communication skills, working and living abroad, in an international environment, managing various conflicts (which would come out as a result of cultural differences or clashes for instance) improved dramatically and actually learning how to separate the work from the personal life, were actually skills I feel I gained during my EVS - and on a long term, this really makes the difference at a work place. As a result, I think I felt more prepared and confident in getting a job abroad, which turned out to be true - immediately after my EVS I got a job in Brussels, for an international Human Rights Organization.

I think my volunteering experience really gave me a boost in my career on the international “market”. I believe this is really important, especially for young people coming from developing countries or poorer communities, who would not have many international opportunities otherwise. It is a great learning by working situation.”





## **VOJTECH (CZECH REPUBLIC) WAS A VOLUNTEER FOR THE UNITED NATIONS**

“During my studies, I worked for a youth organization, I was active in a small political party, and worked for the Czech Government in the area of EU affairs. One day a friend of mine sent me a link that the Czech Republic funds several UN Volunteer assignments a year. I always wanted to work for the UN so I applied and was accepted. I worked for a year for UNAIDS in Uzbekistan in the area of advocacy and communication. Then I became the UNV Program Officer (country level representative of UNV) in Uzbekistan, and after two years I moved to Ukraine.

The professional backgrounds of UN Volunteers are diverse. There is more than 100 job profiles they look for. The priority areas are: basic social services, peace building, disaster risk reduction, youth and volunteer infrastructure.

UNV positions are open to everyone (there are also assignments funded by some member states though but that is a small portion in the overall total number). UN Volunteers receive a living allowance so they can cover their expenses while volunteering. It does not matter if you are rich or poor, just skills matter. Recently UNV launched a Youth UN Volunteer modality for young people from the ages of 18 to 29 who do not have significant work experience in order to open the organization to more young people.

My favorite activity is meeting young and motivated people from various civil society organizations. Sometimes I get invited to speak at an event because those who invite me presume I will say something wise or give valuable advice, so I try not to disappoint them. The most important part of my job is to make sure that the serving UN Volunteers in my country are well supported and have proper conditions to do their job. The hardest part of my work is persuading the other UN agencies that they need much more UN Volunteers in their offices.

This experience allows you to work for a good cause and see the huge value of volunteerism.

For those who want to volunteer here, I suggest to visit the UNV website. For international assignments UNV uses a roster of candidates. Those interested can go to create their profile there. Motivation is a big part of UNV assignments but it is not enough. UN agencies are looking for skilled professionals. Previous volunteer experience is also a big plus. Knowledge of languages is very important too.”



## **ANDREEA (ROMANIA) WAS 26 YEARS OLD WHEN SHE BECAME AN INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER**

“My experience as an international volunteer stands out as a turning point in my life, both professionally and personally. I was 26 at the time of my volunteer engagement, starting a 9 month European Voluntary Service journey after having graduated and worked as a teacher for over one year in my beloved Romania. I was curious about exploring how the European dimension impacts on someone’s life and to see how it is all done in and from Brussels.

I had been a volunteer since the age of 13 and was involved in small environmental projects in my hometown, but also, later on, in projects that used circus as a tool for personal development and social inclusion of children and youth. I had the opportunity to volunteer in the Balkans region with The Serious Road Trip Romania (TSRT-RO) and as a member of the organizing team in their projects run in Resita, Timisoara, Sibiu and rural areas in Romania.

When CEV (European Volunteer Centre) promoted the call for EVS volunteers I knew it was something I had to do! So I applied, got selected, and moved to Brussels! As an EVS I was tasked with helping out the team to organize events and I received training on communication and EU affairs. It was a very special time to be a volunteer, particularly at CEV since my project was organized to support the implementation of the European Year of Volunteering 2011. I travelled a lot and participated in many events across Europe and beyond. I learned about communities and their struggles, interacted with people of different ages from all walks of life, and most importantly, I did all I could to bring my contribution and make a difference.

Once the project was finished I joined the team as a Junior Communications Officer, and after that as Communications and Events Officer. What had started as a 9 months international volunteering project continues, in a different role, almost 9 years later.

There is also a funny, lucky, unexpected side to the story. I met my life partner during this time. He was an EVS volunteer in Amsterdam, and now we have two small bilingual children growing, embracing diversity, and their multicultural roots."





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**THE IMPORTANCE OF  
VOLUNTEERING HAS BEEN  
LONG RECOGNIZED BY THE  
EU INSTITUTIONS**

”



# THE EU CONTEXT: HOW IS THE EU SUPPORTING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS?

The EU has a long tradition of volunteering. The importance of volunteering has been long recognized by the EU institutions that also appointed 2011 as the European Year of Volunteering.

Here you can find out about the current EU programs on this area. You can also search for volunteering projects that are looking for young people right now. Good luck!

Main EU programs promoting youth volunteering

## **1** THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

The European Commission is encouraging [volunteering across borders](#). In particular, it supports young volunteers aged 18-30 through the initiative 'European Solidarity Corps'.

The European Solidarity Corps is the new European Union initiative which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in projects in their own country or abroad that benefit communities and people around Europe.

The young people who participate in the European Solidarity Corps will all agree with and uphold its [Mission and Principles](#).

## HOW CAN YOU TAKE PART IN THE INITIATIVE?

You can register for the European Solidarity Corps when you are 17 years old, but you cannot start a project until you are over 18. European Solidarity Corps projects will be available to people up to the age of 30 years old.

After completing a simple registration process, European Solidarity Corps participants could be selected and invited to join a wide range of projects, such as helping to prevent natural disasters or rebuild afterwards, assisting in centres for asylum seekers, or addressing different social issues in communities.

Projects supported by the European Solidarity Corps can last from two to twelve months. They will usually be located within the European Union Member States and volunteers can decide to stay in their country or to move to another one.

For an overview of the situation with registrations and placements, and for some examples of activities happening in different countries, please see the following link:

[2018\\_youth-03\\_esc\\_in\\_action\\_10.pdf](#)

## Erasmus+ Volunteering Activities

Erasmus+ Volunteering Activities is one of the EU funding programs supporting volunteering activities within the European Solidarity Corps Initiative. Volunteering projects involve different kinds of activities in areas such as youth work, cultural activities, social care or environmental protection. Each volunteer works on an unpaid and full-time basis. What they have achieved and learned through volunteering is certified Europe-wide via the [Youth pass recognition tool](#). They also get a European Solidarity Corps certificate of participation at the end of their service.

Volunteers already involved in an Erasmus+ Volunteering Activity should read the [Info Kit](#) explaining what to expect and with information on the Youthpass and the insurance cover provided. Access to Erasmus+ [Online Linguistic Support](#) will help you learn the language that you volunteer in. Volunteering opportunities are available in both [Erasmus+ Programme countries](#) and [Neighbouring Partner countries](#)- meaning volunteers can get involved outside Europe, too. All essential costs related to the volunteering project are covered. Volunteers are being provided with accommodation, board and any local transport that they may need. They may also receive a small amount of "pocket money". All volunteers are **covered by insurance** during their time abroad.

## 2 THE EU AID VOLUNTEERS

The EU Aid Volunteers is another European Union's new initiative which aims to support humanitarian aid programs. To the end of 2020, the initiative will support up to 4,000 European citizens to be trained and sent by humanitarian organizations to assist in projects worldwide. Local capacity building activities will also support up to 4,400 people in countries affected by disaster. It is planned that an additional 10,000 opportunities will be available for volunteers to get involved in online projects.

The initiative is open to people from a variety of backgrounds, from newcomers to those who

already have a lot of experience in humanitarian projects. Volunteers will receive the training they need, depending on their level of experience, to ensure they are fully prepared before being sent to a project. You can read about the experiences of some of the people who took part in the pilot projects in the link below. Candidates for EU Aid Volunteers in-country projects must be over 18 years of age (no lower age limit for online volunteers) and be citizens of EU Member States or long-term residents in the EU. Citizens from other countries, such as EU candidate and potential candidate countries, countries in the EEA or the European Neighborhood Policy may apply, but this depends on agreements being made between the EU and these countries (check the EU Aid Volunteers website links below for up-to-date details on this.) Non-EU citizens in disaster-stricken countries can also take part in this initiative, as part of local capacity training projects.

## HOW CAN YOU TAKE PART IN THE INITIATIVE?

If you are interested in getting becoming an EU Aid Volunteer, either to go to another country on a project or to be an online volunteer, then look at the initiative's website to read all of the details: [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/eu-aid-volunteers\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/eu-aid-volunteers_en)

### EU ORGANIZATIONS WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE CAN VOLUNTEER

There are several EU organizations that can provide young people with volunteering opportunities:

The European Youth Portal can provide with a list of relevant opportunities according to your needs and preferences: [https://europa.eu/youth/eu%20\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/eu%20_en)

The portal will allow you to choose from a wide range of opportunities:

- [To develop new skills and passions](#)
- [To discover the world](#)
- [To learn more about new cultures](#)



# GET TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE EU COMMITMENT ON VOLUNTEERING..

## **2011: EUROPEAN YEAR OF VOLUNTEERING**

In 2011, the [European Commission](#) launched the European Year of Volunteering to celebrate the efforts of the estimated 100 million Europeans who take part in voluntary activities. The year also aimed at making volunteering easier for people and improving the quality of volunteering in Europe.

Find out more information on the EYV website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/archives/volunteering/index.html>



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# VOLUNTEERING ORGANIZATIONS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC, ITALY, AND ROMANIA

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Voluntary activities play an important role in the European Union, but the situation differs from country to country.

## IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Volunteering has a long history in the Czech lands. Volunteers are mostly involved in activities concerning environmental protection, humanitarian aid and human rights. Volunteering in medical and social spheres and in the fields of culture, sport, education and work with children and youth is also popular. Most of the volunteering programs are located in the capital Prague, however, there are also options in the second biggest city of the Czech Republic, Brno. The number of volunteering options is increasing day by day with the participant demands, and the number of volunteer needs is also growing.

## IN ITALY

To get an overview of the Italian volunteering opportunities, you can take a look at the CSVNet website (the National Association of Volunteers Service Centres) <http://csvnet.it/>. The web portal contains general information, downloadable materials and news on the volunteering field and promotes events. Another useful web portal is Startempo (<https://startempo.com/>). It is a sort of social network that let the users create a free promotional web page for volunteering associations in which it is possible to upload and share initiatives and projects. This platform matches volunteers with organizations. Volunteers can create a personal profile in which specifying their competences, hobbies and ambitions, find a volunteering project and then present themselves as a candidate.

## IN ROMANIA

In Romania, one can find volunteering opportunities on a Volunteering Map developed by Volum Federation ([www.hartavoluntariatului.ro](http://www.hartavoluntariatului.ro)) which correlates the volunteer with the offer of volunteering projects or organizations, and thus making it possible to enroll in different activities, suitable for the interests or skills of volunteers.

**Take a look at the publications' examples of good practice and testimonials to get more information on the organisations where you could volunteer in the Czech Republic, in Italy, and/ or in Romania.**

**Do not hesitate to check the links above as well!**

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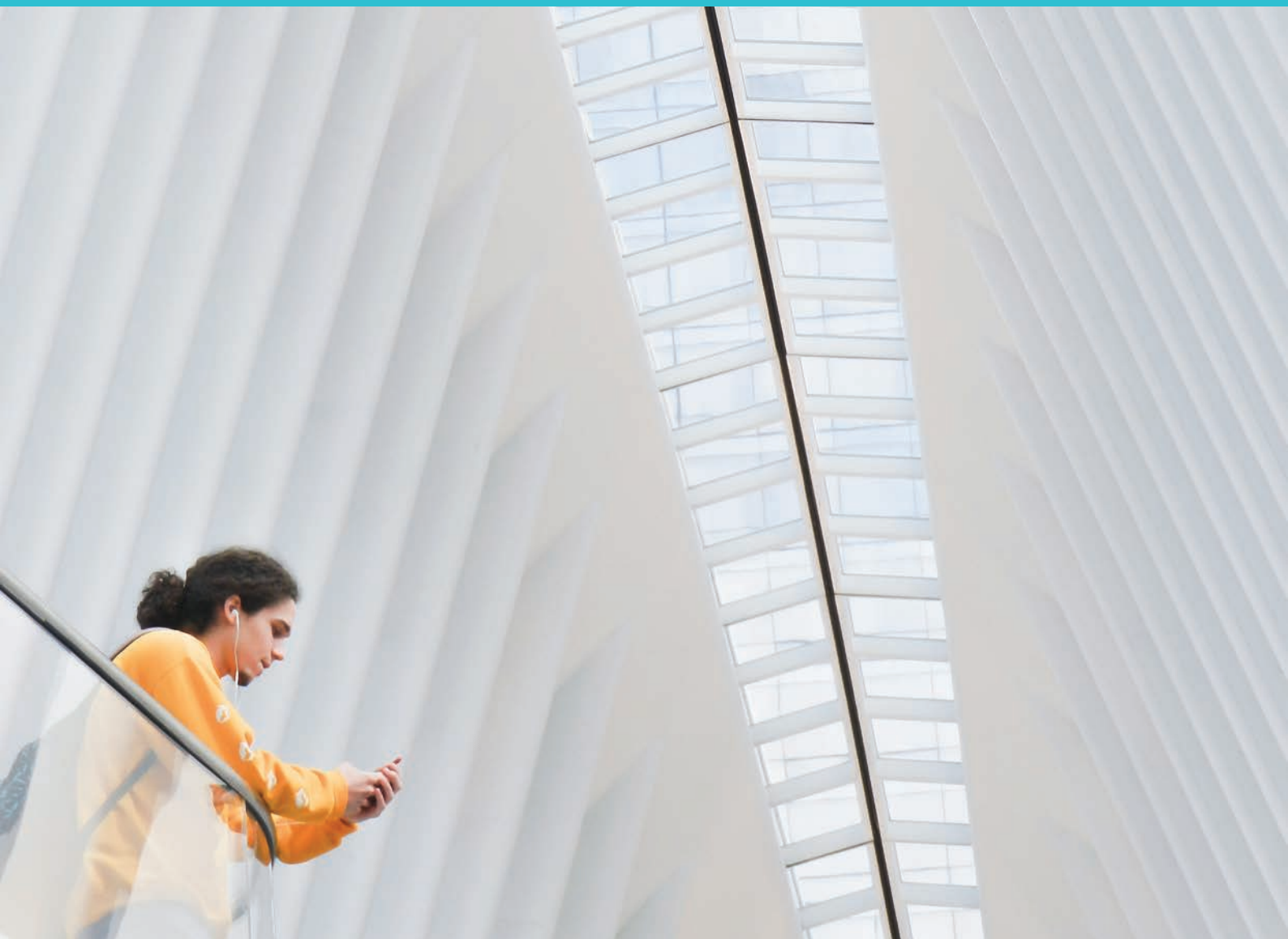
# TAKE THE TIME TO ASSESS YOUR OWN SKILLS AND BRAINSTORM ON YOUR POTENTIAL!

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In this last part of the publication, you will find self-assessment and self-awareness material.

The following exercises sheets will help you brainstorm on your own potential and skills. They will help you identify the volunteering activities and organizations that better fit your profile. They will also help you choose your future professional pathway.

Should you volunteer or work in volunteering centers/NGOs and youth organizations, we invite you to share these tools with your colleagues so that more young people can use them to better understand their potential and their preferences.



# 1

## EXERCISES TO SELF-EXPLORE YOUR “SKILLS”

When you start a volunteering experience, as well as a professional one, do not forget to take some time to think about the skills you have and what you can bring to the organization or the company where you will volunteer and work.

It is also important, once you finish, to check on how the experience helped you acquire new skills and competences. This exercise will help you prepare for future interviews and to choose future volunteering and professional opportunities.

Below, you will find some questions that can help you get ready for, as well as assess, a volunteering experience:

### BEFORE YOU START...

What skills will I be able to offer to the organization where I want to apply? How did I acquire them?

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What are the skills that I want to improve through this experience?

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### ... AFTER THE EXPERIENCE

How was the experience? Do I want to keep on dealing with similar tasks in the future or should I choose a different experience next time?

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Did I learn new skills? If yes, describe them!

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**Did I strengthen my skills? If yes, describe them!**

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**Did this experience help me better manage stressful situations?**

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**Did I learn to better work in a team?**

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**Did I learn to better communicate with other people?**

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**What do I want to improve, in terms of skills, in future volunteering and professional experiences?**

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# 2

## EXERCISES TO DEFINE YOUR OWN "PERSONAL TRAITS"

### PERSONAL QUALITIES – EVALUATION

(tool developed by Volum Federation – Portfolio for volunteer’s experiences – based on ProfilPASS)

Now we will take a look at your personal qualities. These qualities will refer to what you did, how you reacted in the daily activities or in the context of the volunteering activities. This self-assessment will also reflect your attitudes and values. You do not need to evaluate all the qualities. Only mark those that you think apply to you. In what situations did you manifest these qualities? This image is important for you, for example, for a job interview, for accessing volunteer opportunities, for study interviews, etc.

DESCRIBE	COMPLETELY TRUE	USUALLY TRUE	VERY RARELY TRUE	NOT AT ALL TRUE
Teamwork				
Proactivity				
Organizational skills				
Time management skills				
Self confidence				
Planning skills				
Interpersonal skills				
Creativity				
Enthusiasm				
Desire to learn				
Communication skills				
Result-oriented approach				
Persistence				
Attention to details				
Patience				
Thoughtfulness				
Curiosity				
Methodical approach				
Tolerance				
Reliability				
Punctuality				
Openness to receive constructive feedback				
Negotiation skills				
Capacity to adapt				
Other:				

## EXERCISE: PERSONAL QUALITIES

You can find here a list of personal qualities from which you can choose those which you think that fit yourself and characterize you in most situations of life.

Who are you? Tick your personal qualities among these below:

PERSONAL QUALITIES	I AM...
Active	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adventurous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ambitious	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brave	<input type="checkbox"/>
Calm	<input type="checkbox"/>
Careful	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cheerful	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Courageous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curious	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encouraging	<input type="checkbox"/>
Energetic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enthusiastic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friendly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funny	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gentle	<input type="checkbox"/>
Giving	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>
Honest	<input type="checkbox"/>
Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kind	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loyal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peaceful	<input type="checkbox"/>
Polite	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rational	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reliable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Responsible	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-confident	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serious	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sincere	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thankful	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thoughtful	<input type="checkbox"/>

## EXERCISE 4: SWOT ANALYSIS

In this exercise, you can evaluate your personal strengths and weaknesses, and also opportunities and threats for your potential activity as a volunteer. You can use the following questions to find the answers for yourself:

■ What qualities do you think you have?

■ In what situations do other people ask for your help?

■ What difficult situations did you overcome?

■ What do you think you could improve to yourself?

■ What advantages do you have now to take on for volunteering?

■ What opportunities are there for volunteering that you could exploit now?

■ What resources are there available for your potential volunteering work?

■ What external factors/situations could prevent you from volunteering now?

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>

# 3

## EXERCISES TO IDENTIFY YOUR PERSONAL “VALUES”

### EXERCISE 1

Determine your 5 top values based on the feelings of happiness and fulfillment:

	IMPORTANCE		
	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
<b>Accomplishment:</b> To achieve a goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Affection:</b> To be caring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Affiliation:</b> To be accepted and liked by others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Autonomy:</b> To direct my priorities and schedules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Challenge:</b> To have challenging tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Competence:</b> To be respected for my ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Expertise:</b> To deepen your knowledge in your field	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Family:</b> To spend time with family and friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Growth:</b> To maximize my full potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Health:</b> To be in good physical and mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Integrity:</b> To do the right thing in a reliable way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Leadership:</b> To influence and direct others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Location:</b> To live where I want to live	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Money:</b> To be financially successful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Pleasure:</b> To have fun; to enjoy life and work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Recognition:</b> To have a certain social status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Security:</b> To have a secure financial situation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Service:</b> To help other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Spiritual:</b> To look at the inner harmony	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Other Values:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Other Values:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Other Values:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 2 IDENTIFY THE TIMES WHEN YOU FELT MOST PROUD:

Shortly describe the situation you were in

---



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**3 IDENTIFY THE TIMES WHEN YOU FELT MOST FULFILLED OR HAPPY:**

Shortly describe the situation you were in

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---

**4 WHAT VALUES SHOULD BE SATISFIED IN YOUR STUDENT LIFE:**

Select up to 5 of the values

---

---

**5 WHAT VALUES SHOULD BE SATISFIED IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE:**

Select up to 5 of the values

---

---

**6 THINK ABOUT THE VALUES YOU HAVE ALREADY PICKED IN PREVIOUS QUESTIONS AND DECIDE, IF THEY MATCH YOUR ORDINARY AND EVERYDAY LIFESTYLE:**

- a. yes, definitely       b. most of them yes  
 c. most of them no       d. none
- 

**7 IN WHAT WAYS COULD YOU ACHIEVE GREATER SATISFACTION OF YOUR VALUES IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE:**

Describe the possibilities and steps for such achievement.

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**8 IN WHAT WAYS COULD YOU ACHIEVE GREATER SATISFACTION OF YOUR VALUES IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL/STUDENT LIFE:**

Describe the possibilities and steps for such achievement.

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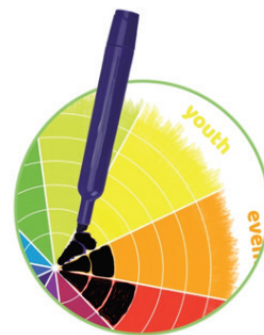
---

# MY VOLUNTEERING COLOR

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## HOW TO USE:

Grab a dark marker! Below you will find a 10 slice circle and 10 sentences. If the sentence applies to you, you have to color one or more parts of the indicated below the sentence.



Let's take the example in the picture above!

If you do like to share what you know with other people, you will start by coloring two segments of the yellow slice.

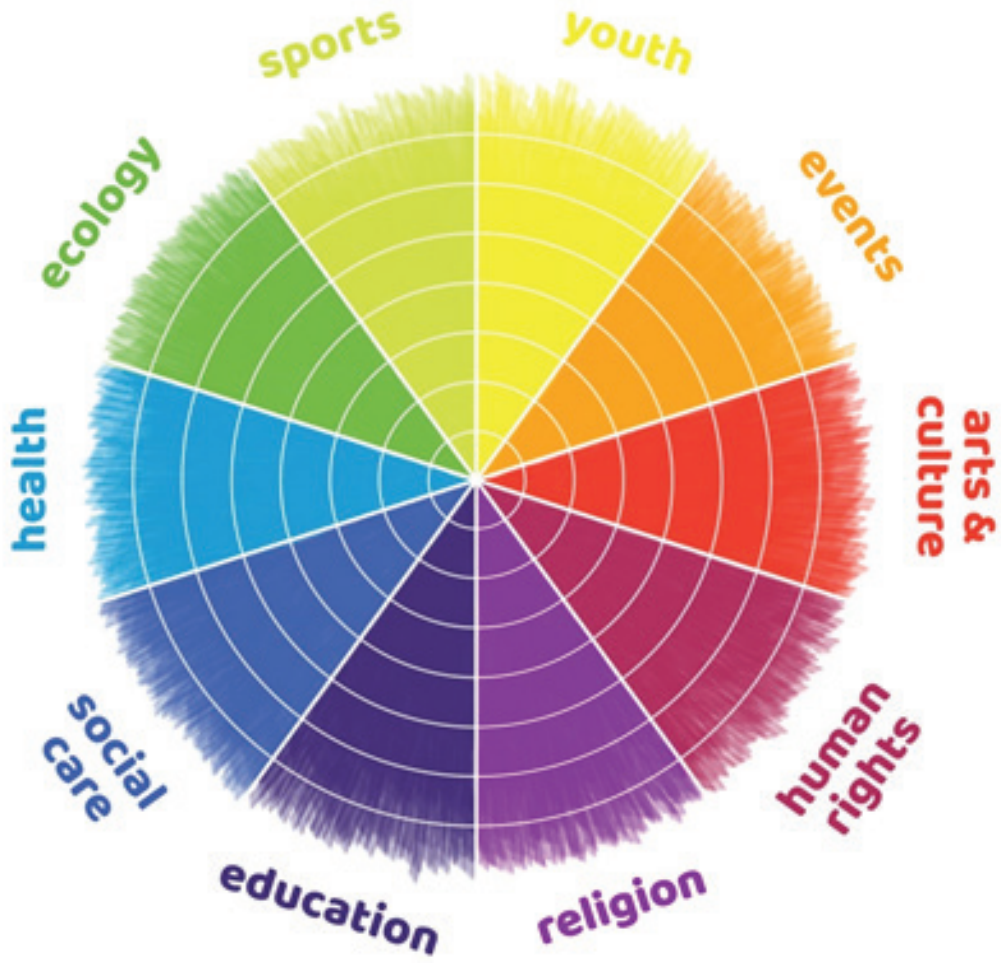
Then, you will go on to color one pink segment, one purple segment and two of the blue ones. Then you can move on to the next question and do the same.

If the sentence is not true for you, move to the next one without coloring.

At the end of the exercise, you will have slices that are filled by your marker, and others that are not. The most fully coloured slice is your volunteering color.

If, for example, at the end of the questions you have most of the red slice colored, we suggest you find an organization or a museum that are connected to arts and culture. If you have more slices colored, look for organizations in both fields, and see which one you like more!

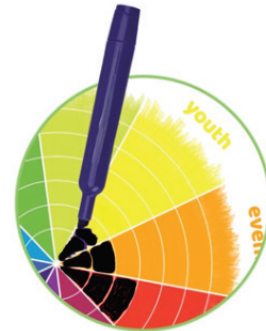
# THE WHEEL:



# THE QUESTIONS:

## HOW TO USE:

Grab a dark marker! Below you will find a 10 slice circle and 10 sentences. If the sentence applies to you, you have to color one or more parts of the indicated below the sentence.



Let's take the example in the picture above!

If you do like to share what you know with other people, you will start by coloring two segments of the yellow slice.

Then, you will go on to color one pink segment, one purple segment and two of the blue ones. Then you can move on to the next question and do the same.

If the sentence is not true for you, move to the next one without coloring.

## The Questions:

I like to talk to people, write or use any way to get my thoughts to them



I love nature, I like to spend time outdoor, and I wish everyone would respect plants and animals.



I like to share what I know with other people and help them to better understand things



I wish everyone would have a family or friends to support them and help them through the rough times .



I love sports, I have a ton of energy, and I like to be part of a team.



I believe some people have less chance than others and I would like t he world to respect everyone.



I like to be among many different people and help them have a good experience



I like to think about everything that is going to happen next and make sure I prepare for everything.



I am interested in how the bodies of people, animals and plants work



I like to dance, play music, take photos, watch movies, go to the theatre, paint OR do anything creative.





# MAKE THE BEST OUT OF YOUR VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE!

Hoping that this guide has given you a good overview of the benefits and the opportunities that volunteering can offer you, we would like to conclude this guide with some tips on how you can benefit from a volunteering experience for your personal and professional development:

## BEFORE STARTING...

You have no excuses 😊

- Even if you are going through a big life change, such as moving to a new town or city, this does not mean that you have no time to volunteer
- Taking part in volunteering activities does not mean to sacrifice your personal or professional life. Volunteering is flexible and it might even bring you bigger joy and understanding to your personal and professional lives

**Get the right attitude!**

- Be ready to get out of your comfort zone
- Show the world you give, not only take
- Do not have unnecessary worries: you will do more than fine
- Wait for anything and take everything as a challenge
- Be flexible
- Be aware that you have a lot to offer. dare to share it with the people you will meet during your volunteering experience

## HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY?

- Get involved in something you are passionate about. It will help you and the others a lot more than you can imagine
- You do not need to have any special knowledge or skills to be a volunteer. However, if you can choose among different options, please take the time to think about what are your skills, interests, passions and availabilities
  - What are my goals and expectations?
  - How much time can I devote to it?
  - What kind of tasks would I like to undertake?
  - What can I do?
- Choose the right offer:
  - Check the requirements: do I have them?
  - Check how much time I need to devote to the activity: do you have it?
  - Check the starting time of the volunteering activity: is it feasible? (if you wish to travel abroad, it is better to start selecting the initiative well in advance)

## WHERE TO VOLUNTEER?

### EVERYWHERE IS A PLACE FOR VOLUNTEERING!

#### IF YOU ARE TRAVELLING ABROAD:

- Before leaving, check well in advance whether you need any visas or vaccines
- Pack some little decoration or pictures that are close to you. These little things will become the connection with your home from a distant country and initially unknown place.
- Keep an open mind throughout your international experience: you will meet people, cultures and habits that are different from yours and from which you can learn a lot
- Take the chance, if possible, to learn or better learn a foreign language
- Be prepared to return with a lot more skills, competences and friends

### DURING THE VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE...

#### AGAIN: GET THE RIGHT ATTITUDE!

- Have a “I am here and now” attitude. Enjoy the time you are dedicating to volunteering. Take the time to perceive the atmosphere, people, things, differences and similarities. Just to live it here and now
- Enjoy everything you can
- Be curious and learn as much as you can. Don’t be afraid to test different roles. As a volunteer

you have a lot of freedom and support

- There is always room for some new experiences and some adventures

## HOW TO ENSURE THAT YOUR EXPERIENCE IS HELPING YOU BOOST YOUR POTENTIAL?

- Take the chance to make use of all your skills and talents
- Get used to have responsibilities
- Make sure that a tutor is supporting you throughout the volunteering period
- Seize the opportunity to learn new things and develop new skills
- Consider volunteering to be a training for career, a chance to try what is best for you
- Get used to working with people and get the courage to speak out loud
- Interact with people from different age, social, and cultural groups
- Learn empathy
- Experience generosity
- Get to know new people, not only friends, but possibly future employers or colleagues

## AFTERWARDS...

- In the end, volunteering comes with plenty of rewards!
- Your involvement is a true investment in yourself and in the community you will work in.
- Taking part in projects were helping other might help you as well. Meeting new people and communities, experiencing new activities and places will provide valuable lessons.
- Volunteering is about sharing as well as gaining new skills, knowledge and allowing you change your current habits
- You can gain experiences and skills that will be helpful for your future career, or even your current one

## UPDATE YOUR CV

Having an experience as volunteer can help you understand what professional path you would like to undertake. It also helps you acquire new skills, such as managing your workload, working in a team, etc. Volunteering can also allow you to take part in training courses that could be highlighted in your curriculum vitae. Moreover, your volunteering experience can show your passions and interests while applying to a job. For example, if you want to work in the communication field, you could benefit from having managed the social media of an organization as a volunteer, or you could show that you improved your language skills by volunteering abroad.

## THEREFORE, AFTER A VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE, DO NOT HESITATE TO:

- Include in your CV any training programmes you attended as a volunteer
- Add in your CV all the activities you undertook that are relevant for the job you would like to do in the future (did you organise events? did you update social media channels? make it visible!)
- Highlight the skills you acquired (did you develop good interpersonal/ leadership skills? did you learn how to use a new software? write it down in your CV!)
- Your interests, hobbies, passions that are relevant for the job you would like to do and that your volunteering experience can show. When you apply to a job, do not forget to mention them in your motivation letter too.



**ANY GOOD EXPERIENCE  
WILL HELP YOU DEVELOP  
YOUR PERSONALITY  
AND SKILLS. YOU WILL  
EXPERIENCE THINGS  
THAT YOU WOULD NEVER  
EXPERIENCE OTHERWISE!**



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## HELP US SPREAD THE WORD!

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We believe in the potential of youth! We aim to inform more young people about the benefits of volunteering and help them find volunteering opportunities.

Help us reach out more young people and encourage them to volunteer!

Share this guide with your family, your friends and any other relevant contacts: the guide is available in English, Czech, Italian, and Romanian. It can be easily downloaded from the project website or you can ask a printed version of the guide from the organizations partners of the project.

Should you need more information on how you can help us spread the word among young people on the benefits of volunteering and the volunteering opportunities in the EU, in particular in the **Czech Republic, Ireland, Italy, and Romania**, please do not hesitate to visit the project website at [www.creatyv.eu](http://www.creatyv.eu).

