

Opportunities for International Christian Volunteers in Christian Endeavor

What are opportunities for international volunteers?

Many young people in their early twenties are today looking for opportunities to get some international experience and provide a useful service, before going into employment or further training.

The duration of such a volunteer service is usually between a couple of months and a year. Many of the young people are not expecting a salary, but would appreciate the provision of free or cheap accommodation and meals. The volunteers should not replace employed workers, but support ongoing activities. They need a supervisor who supports and instructs them. The hosting organization should also take care of the legal framework. In some countries the volunteers could be part of a national or international volunteer program (e.g. European Volunteer Service).

Possible activities could be helping in youth clubs or Sunday Schools, practical work in camps, retreat centers, etc., involvement in social projects and outreach programs, ...

Why should Christian Endeavour provide opportunities for volunteers?

The service as an international volunteer is a way to implement the CE principles of "Service for Christ" and "Fellowship with Christ's People". Young Christians will have an opportunity to serve and to use the talents and strength God has given them. At the same time they can experience fellowship with Christians from other countries with a different language, cultural and denominational background.

This experience may help to build links within the worldwide CE movement and encourage contacts and mutual support between national CE unions and CE societies from different countries.

How would such a volunteer service be operated?

In order to avoid unnecessary administrative work, the World's CE Union should facilitate the sharing of information about volunteer opportunities, while the exchange of volunteers is handled directly between the National CE Unions.

The main responsibility of the WCEU would be to share information about volunteer opportunities provided by the national unions through the WCEU website.

The national unions would need to provide and update information about opportunities for volunteer placements in their respective countries. They would also screen the applications of young people from their countries, prepare the volunteers for overseas placements and forward the applications to the hosting organizations. The screening could be done through questionnaires, references from youth leaders, pastors, etc. and interviews. The preparation would include information about legal requirements (visa, insurance, etc.) and an orientation about intercultural ministry, health risks, etc.

What are the next steps?

a) If your organization can offer placements for Christian volunteers please give a clear description of the opportunities you offer. This should include:

- The activities expected
- What is required of the volunteers (age, sex, language, skills, personality, etc.)
- The condition (duration, timing, if accommodation and food is provided, training offered, etc.)
- Information about the hosting organisation
- Contact person for applications (address, telephone, e-mail)

Please send this information or any questions or suggestions to sma@ec-jugend.de.

The information will be made available at www.worldsceunion.org

b) If you want to help young Christians from your country to make use the volunteer opportunities, you need to publish this information within your national union, appoint a contact person for volunteer services and set up your own system for screening and preparing your volunteers. In future suggestions and help for this may be available at www.worldsceunion.org.