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Youth Volunteer Scheme
A bridge between Voluntary Organisations and Youths

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Youth Volunteer Scheme

A bridge between Voluntary Organisations and Youths

1.0 Brief of the Youth Volunteer Scheme

1.1 Objective of the Scheme

The **Youth Volunteer Scheme** is intended to achieve two main goals. The first goal is to help young people improve their skills and employment prospects by giving them an opportunity to take up volunteering as part of their non-formal and informal learning process. It will also enable them to discover the value of voluntary service and helps to foster a sense of community and active citizenship. The second goal of the scheme is to support Voluntary Organisations in attracting young people to volunteering, enabling them to enhance their capacity with new volunteers and fresh ideas.

The Scheme will also support overseas voluntary work experiences for young people through locally registered Voluntary Organisations to carry out international volunteer service in Europe, Africa, Asia, Gulf Countries or South America.

The **Youth Volunteer Scheme** has an allocated fund of €150,000.00 of which €50,000.00 are to support local Youth voluntary work and €100,000.00 to support youth voluntary work overseas.

1.2 Aims of the Scheme

The specific objectives pursued by the **Youth Volunteer Scheme** are to:

- ❖ Promote the participation in the community as an active citizen.
- ❖ Improve the level of key competences and skills of young people, including those with fewer opportunities.
- ❖ Foster quality improvements in youth voluntary work.
- ❖ Promote an intercultural dimension with a non-formal approach.

1.3 Priorities of the Scheme

The following policy priorities will be pursued:

- ❖ Promoting active citizenship to young people by fostering social inclusion and the active participation of young people in society.
- ❖ Promoting young people's social inclusion and well-being, mainly through empowerment and upskilling, to combat youth unemployment.
- ❖ Raising awareness about voluntary work.
- ❖ Developing basic and transversal skills, such as entrepreneurship, working in a team and leadership skills.
- ❖ Promoting responsibility and independence.

Overseas Specific Priorities:

- ❖ Increasing the skills of young people through the practical experience of volunteering abroad.
- ❖ Encouraging the learning of another language.
- ❖ Developing the ability of young people to interact with persons speaking a different language and having a different culture.
- ❖ Spreading tolerance among young people.

2.0 Procedure of the Youth Volunteer Scheme

2.1 Young People eligible to participate in the Scheme

This Scheme allows young people aged 16 (or having finished Form Five) to 30 years old, who are Maltese nationals or local residents, to express their personal commitment through unpaid voluntary service for a period of one (1) to six (6) months with a local Voluntary Organisation.

In the case of overseas voluntary work experiences, the period shall be between two (2) weeks and three (3) months and the volunteers must be 18 to 30 years old. Each volunteer may only benefit from the scheme once in a particular calendar year, and not more than twice overall.

Youth Volunteers are given the opportunity to contribute to the daily work of voluntary organisations according to the nature of the same organisation. Youth Volunteers will be allocated a monthly stipend by the Scheme which will be paid to them directly by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector.

In the case of overseas voluntary work experiences, the Scheme shall cover a percentage of the costs relating to mobility.

2.2 Voluntary Organisations eligible to participate in the Scheme

Only Voluntary Organisations enrolled and compliant with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations are eligible to participate and host young people under this Scheme. The hosting Voluntary Organisation is responsible for:

- ❖ Training and managing the Youth Volunteers.
- ❖ Setting up a specific task/project on which the volunteer shall work on.
- ❖ Monitoring and supporting the Youth Volunteers, working in Voluntary Organisations in the areas of Environment and Animal Welfare, Arts and Culture, Health and Disability, Social and Humanitarian, Sports and Education.
- ❖ Providing an adequate and safe working environment to Youth Volunteers according to local Health and Safety regulations and other work-related legislations.
- ❖ In the case of minors, volunteers shall always not be left to work on their own and need to be supervised except in the case of remote working.

2.3 Voluntary Organisations eligible to participate in the Overseas Scheme

Only Voluntary Organisations enrolled and compliant with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations are eligible to participate and host young people under the Overseas Scheme. The Voluntary Organisations must also prove that they have at least five years of experience in managing projects and volunteers overseas. VOs are also to declare their international partners and the partner's experience. In this case, the hosting Voluntary Organisation is responsible for:

- ❖ Training Youth Volunteers in preparation to their giving service overseas.
- ❖ Managing Youth Volunteers when they are giving service overseas.
- ❖ Monitoring and supporting the Youth Volunteers, especially those working in Voluntary Organisations in the areas of Health, Social and Humanitarian.
- ❖ Providing an adequate and safe working environment to Youth Volunteers according to local Health and Safety regulations and other work-related legislations.
- ❖ Providing all adequate support to Youth Volunteers.

2.4 In-eligible Items under the youth scheme

The following activities are not considered as eligible activities under the Youth Volunteer Scheme:

- ❖ Unstructured activities (example: day-to-day office work / Administrative work).
- ❖ Normal activities undertaken by the VO which are not specifically intended for young people.
- ❖ A work placement in an enterprise.
- ❖ A paid job.
- ❖ A recreation or tourist activity.
- ❖ Exploitation of a cheap workforce.
- ❖ A language course abroad.

In order for the Voluntary Organisation's applications to be considered eligible, the VO must present a detailed description of a project or work scheme intended for the youth/s. This description needs to be included in the appropriate section of the Local Host Application and Local Youth Volunteer Application. The scheme of work or project presented needs to have an aim and purpose for the entirety of the youth's placement. A VO must not consider the Youth Volunteer Scheme primarily as a work placement on the other hand they are to give priority to what the Youth Volunteer will gain out of the placement. When filling the description of the youth project in the applications, a VO must include a wholistic and flowing scheme of work for the volunteer where it is clear that all the tasks are relevant to one another. A VO must also include what their organisation will provide to the Youth Volunteers, to further support and justify the aim of the project. Such activities might involve training youths in a particular subject, sending them to lectures or talks, providing them with a mentor etc.

3.0 Guidelines for the Youth Volunteer Scheme

3.1 Introduction

The *Youth Volunteer Scheme* aims to support Young People taking an active part in voluntary organisations. The first goal is to help young people improve their skills and employment prospects by giving them an opportunity to take up volunteering as part of their non-formal and informal learning process. It will also enable them to discover the value of voluntary service and help to foster a sense of community and active citizenship.

The second goal of the scheme is to support Voluntary Organisations in attracting young people to volunteering, enabling them to enhance their capacity with new volunteers and fresh ideas. This guide is intended to help Voluntary Organisations obtain host accreditation for the *Youth Volunteer Scheme*.

The third goal of the Scheme is to support overseas voluntary work experiences for young people through locally registered Voluntary Organisations to carry out international volunteer service in Europe, Africa, Asia or South America. The Overseas Scheme is a unique opportunity for young people to come into contact with cultures different from their own and to acquire new skills and abilities useful for their personal and professional growth.

3.2 What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is a requirement needed for Voluntary Organisations to host Youth Volunteers under the *Youth Volunteer Scheme*. It is designed to ensure consistently high standards in the Scheme and to help Youth Volunteers find placements in Voluntary Organisations and vice versa.

Accreditation is a quality assurance process facilitating communication between host Voluntary Organisations and the Scheme structures, so that all parties involved are aware of the values, objectives, and rules of the Scheme. All accredited Voluntary Organisations must show they have the capacity and structure to be able to engage, train, manage, monitor, and support Youth Volunteers.

In the case of the Overseas Scheme, Voluntary Organisations also must give proof of their experience in the field. The experience of overseas projects should be of a minimum of five years. VOs are also to declare their international partners and the partner's experience.

3.3 Who is the Accreditation for?

Accreditation is for Voluntary Organisations that want to host Young Volunteers under this Scheme. To obtain accreditation, the Voluntary Organisation submitting the relevant application must be enrolled and compliant with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations, and must show that it has the

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capacity to host volunteers. A Youth Volunteer may be hosted and give service only with and within the accredited host Voluntary Organisation.

3.4 Call for Applications for Host Voluntary Organisations

Calls for applications for Accreditation to become Host Voluntary Organisations shall be issued regularly for Youth Volunteer placements, where Voluntary Organisations must submit the amount of Youth Volunteers being requested and the type of voluntary work these volunteers will be engaged in.

In the case of the Overseas Scheme, the Voluntary Organisation shall also provide a list of overseas projects undertaken by the same organisation, a brief of the project in which the Youth Volunteers will be participating and the relevant logistical arrangements.

Voluntary Organisations can submit their Accreditation Application to become Host Voluntary Organisations at any point in time to be considered for accreditation which call will be kept open throughout the rest of the calendar year.

Voluntary Organisations may apply to host up to four (4) Youth Volunteers per calendar year. With regard to overseas projects, the maximum number of mobilites is four (4) per project and eight (8) per calendar year (divided between different projects). Should a Voluntary Organisation wish to host more than the indicated number, the VO may express such interest and would be considered should there be a number of Youth Volunteers who still need placement following the take up by other Voluntary Organisations or should there be a number of Youth Volunteers who would specifically wish to work in that particular sector.

In cases related to :

- persons at risk of social exclusion
- and/or disability

the maximum placement duration may be extended up to twelve (12) months and the hours per week may be extended to 30 hours.

Once approved, accreditation is valid for one calendar year, though the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector reserves the right to revoke the accreditation during the agreed period should there be reasonable grounds to act in such a manner. An accredited Host Voluntary Organisation must renew its interest to participate in the Scheme each new calendar year. In the case of the Overseas Scheme, host approval is awarded on a project by project basis.

Host Voluntary Organisation applications for hosting volunteers locally must be submitted **at least one (1) calendar month prior to placement starting date.**

Host Voluntary Organisation applications for overseas projects must be submitted **at least two (2) calendar months prior to mobility.**

Host accreditation is to be renewed at the beginning of every calendar year.

3.5 Assessment Criteria

The evaluation shall be carried out by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector Evaluation Committee which shall assess the Accreditation Application.

More specifically, the assessment of an applicant Voluntary Organisation will be based on the following:

For all applicant Voluntary Organisations:

Motivation and experience, in particular:

- motivation for taking part in the Scheme;
- previous experience with similar placements of young people which might be the European **Voluntary** Service (EVS), international projects and working with full-time volunteers.

The organisation's aims, activities and capacities, in particular (refer to section 2.4 for more info):

- the organisation's aims and objectives for the youth placement;
- the benefits of the placement for the youth volunteers
- regular activities carried out by the organisation;
- the wholistic flow of the project or scheme of work
- organisational and administrative capacity, particularly in order to ensure that the applicant Voluntary Organisation has the capacity to host or coordinate the requested number of Youth Volunteers.

Risk, safety and well-being, in particular:

- how to prevent risks and crisis management;
- how to manage conflicts and cultural shock;
- how to guarantee safe working conditions.

The management of volunteers, in particular:

- training and managing Youth Volunteers;
- monitoring, mentoring and supporting Youth Volunteers, especially those working with Voluntary Organisations in the areas of Health, Social and Humanitarian Action.

Ideas for future placements, in particular:

- possible themes and activities;
- relevance to Youth Volunteer Scheme objectives and priorities;
- inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities;
- plans for evaluation during and after a placement;

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- ideas concerning visibility of the Youth Volunteer Scheme.

Possible volunteer tasks, in particular:

- awareness of and ideas for well-defined tasks constituting of Maximum 15 hours per week;
- how to avoid job substitution and routine tasks;
- how to ensure quality task-related training and support.

Learning aspects, in particular:

- familiarity with the concepts of non-formal learning;
- learning opportunities offered through the service.

3.6 After Accreditation

The accredited Host Voluntary Organisations will be listed in the Youth Volunteer Scheme database of accredited organisations on the website. The database is the main tool for Youth Volunteers to find Host Voluntary Organisations.

The full name and contact details of the contact person identified in the Accreditation Application form is published together with a description of the organisation, motivation and experience, and the placement environment. The VO shall identify the skills required for volunteers to participate in its projects. The contact person will also be responsible for keeping contact details up-to-date and for liaising with MCVS.

3.7 Call for Applications for Youth Volunteers

Young persons between the ages of 16-30 (15+ as long as they have finished secondary school), who are Maltese nationals or residents, can apply for placements under the Youth Volunteer Work Scheme. The placements under this Scheme shall be to carry out voluntary service for a minimum of 1 month to a maximum of 6 months with a local Voluntary Organisation.

In the case of overseas voluntary work experiences, the duration shall be between two (2) weeks and three (3) months and the Youth Volunteer must be 18 to 30 years old. The placements under this part of the identify their skills, aptitudes and related experience in similar projects/experiences.

Youth Volunteer applications for local voluntary work must be submitted **at least one (1) calendar month prior to placement starting date.**

Youth Volunteer applications for overseas voluntary work must be submitted **at least two (2) calendar months prior to mobility.**

The call for Application under this Scheme is open throughout the year and shall close on expiration of funds.

Youth Volunteers are given the opportunity to choose from the approved placements provided by the Accredited Host Voluntary Organisations. The selection of the Youth Volunteers shall be carried out by the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector which will evaluate all applications according to a set of established evaluation criteria. As a result of the evaluation, all applications are placed in a ranking list and Youth Volunteers will be placed in their preferred Voluntary Organisation according to availability.

3.8 Reporting

Volunteers are to prepare and send a weekly report of their activities to MCVS for accountability and monitoring purpose. The report is to be endorsed by the host VO.

Overseas Volunteers are to present a full detailed report on their return.

3.9 Payment Procedures

The financial assistance for the stipend under this Scheme will last for not more than six (6) months from the starting date of the placement of the eligible person/s with the accredited Voluntary Organisation. The Youth Volunteers will undertake a 15-hour weekly placement with the Voluntary Organisation. The financial assistance given in the form of stipends is fixed at a rate of €3.50 per hour to a maximum of €52.50 per week.

In the case of overseas voluntary work, the Scheme shall cover the following:

- a) A per diem allowance of €15, which shall cover accommodation, food, and local transportation.
- b) 80% travel expenses (flights),
- c) Travel and health insurance.

The maximum financial allocation for each Youth Volunteer shall be of €2,500.

As part of the Payment Procedures, the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector will be responsible to:

- a) Verify Weekly Attendance Reports and Monthly Reports that are kept by the host Voluntary Organisation in accordance with the Grant Agreement for the issuing of monthly payments. These weekly reports and monthly reports must be submitted by the end of the following month at the latest.

- b) In the case of overseas voluntary work, verify all documents relating to mobility including flight tickets receipt, boarding passes, and travel insurance receipt (where applicable). The Youth Volunteers are also required to submit a report about the experience and some photos.
- c) On satisfactory verification, MCVS shall issue the payment due directly to the Youth Volunteer every four working weeks.

Payment shall not be undertaken by MCVS in the absence of required reports stated in Article 3.8.

3.10 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector shall hold monitoring visits, to verify compliance with conditions laid down in the Youth Volunteer Scheme Grant Agreement and Guidelines. The monitoring visit will be supported by a monitoring report and photos.

The Accredited Host Voluntary Organisation accepts to participate in and contribute to monitoring and evaluation activities organised by MCVS as well as other persons and organisations mandated by them.

For both overseas and local voluntary work, the host Voluntary Organisation is to submit a Final Report within two weeks of the end of a Youth Volunteer placement, describing the outcomes.

3.11 Information and Publicity

To enhance transparency regarding use of the funds, the names of the Accredited Host Voluntary Organisations and the amount of indirect funding allocated will be published electronically or otherwise.

As part of such publicity, the Accredited Host Voluntary Organisations will be obliged to fix in a prominent place a poster which will be provided by MCVS which will specify that the entity is participating in the Youth Volunteer Scheme. This poster must be so exhibited throughout the Scheme period (i.e. throughout the placement period.)

Accredited Host Voluntary Organisations must collaborate with MCVS during the organisation of events or promotional activities, including networks and exchanges of experience.

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4.0 How to Apply – Summary and pointers

Submission of Applications

Voluntary Organisations are to submit both Host Application and Youth Volunteer Application in order to take part in this scheme. The Youth Volunteer Application will not be considered unless the Host Application has been submitted as well as. A VO needs to be granted permission to host youths (refer to section 3.2 for more information). Both Host Application and Youth Volunteer Application need to be submitted accordingly when applying for the local program as well as for the overseas program.

Eligibility of Applications

When applying for the youth scheme it is very important to keep in mind the eligibility criteria of the scheme. More information in section 2.4 and 3.5

From where to Apply

Voluntary organisations are to apply from <https://maltacvs.org/> (Youth Volunteer scheme panel found at the bottom of the web page) or through <https://www.vofunding.org.mt/>

Applications Available

The following are the names of the applications available which are to be submitted accordingly.

Local Programme

- Youth Volunteer scheme – Local Host Application
- Youth Volunteer scheme – Local Youth Application

Overseas Programme

- Youth Volunteer scheme – Overseas Host Application
- Youth Volunteer scheme – Overseas Youth Application

Youths – Expression of interest

Youths interested in volunteering under the Youth Volunteer Scheme which are not currently involved with a voluntary organisation, may submit their application through Voluntiera Malta. Kindly tick the box referring to the Youth Volunteer Scheme in the Voluntiera Malta application. Youths will be interviewed and paired with the most appropriate Voluntary Organisation who will be able to apply to participate in the Youth Volunteer Scheme.

<https://volunteers.mt/> (English) Or <https://volunteers.mt/mt/> (Maltese)

More Information

For any queries or more information, kindly contact Ms Mandy Portelli on 22411121 or email on mandy-cristina.portelli.3@gov.mt