



Further information for Volunteers

Index

Introduction.....	2
Volunteering work.....	2
Finding a Volunteering Placement.....	2
Group/Individual experience.....	3
Intercultural Exchange.....	3
How many placements can you go to throughout the Planetary Service Year?.....	4
Finances, Costs and Insurances.....	4
Daily Costs.....	5
Recording Experience of Planetary Service year.....	5
Being part of the evaluation process.....	6
The role of planetary service as a Movement.....	6
Mentoring Framework.....	6
English Language Proficiency.....	7

Introduction

In the following document you will find a more detailed description of what we hope for from Planetary Service volunteers, especially considering that this first year will run as a prototype to adapt and refine the structure for future generations. As you may have already read, the prototype year participants will consist of the pioneers of the project. Young adults who are engaged and willing to contribute to a rich documentation of their experiences (e.g. video, writing, art, etc), as well as open to develop the idea together with the Planetary Service team throughout the year and after their Planetary Service experience by giving feedback, input and being part of an evaluation process. The prototype year will begin in September 2023 and run until June 2024 after which the review phase will begin.

Volunteering work

As Planetary Service we want to be very cautious that both the project hosts and the volunteers understand clearly what volunteering means for us and avoid misusing this concept.

We understand volunteering as an **average of 20-30 hours per week**. Giving participants **two days off a week**. We also understand that not all projects have a similar workload every day and week of the year. **Sometimes more or less time could be required to fulfil the project's goals**. This is in principle **not a problem if it has been agreed upon between the project host and the volunteers previously and some form of compensation for time** e.g. more time off in a quieter period of the year is provided. Importantly, **volunteer work does not replace paid labour**. Volunteers will have certain tasks and responsibilities which may overlap with those of paid employees. However the motivation and origin for volunteer work is based on an exchange of intercultural, personal and practical experience and basic necessities for helping out whereas a paid employee carries a larger responsibility and knowledge which is remunerated financially.

If this is unclear we are happy to discuss it further in personal communications.

Finding a Volunteering Placement

For the prototype year the **Planetary Service** team will **have a list of potential placement projects** that we have previously contacted and come to agreements with regarding the possibility to do a placement at. These projects are ones which we find suitable and trustworthy to host the prototype year participants well. As such, you as a **participant, will choose to contact one or more** of these projects (**max. 3**) **to organise your year experience**. We, as **Planetary Service, must be included in the early contact** with the placement hosts in order to

make sure that the agreements made between yourself and the placement host meets our criteria for receiving a Planetary Service completion certificate. If this isn't followed we will not be able to grant you your Planetary Service certificate of completion.

If you have a project in mind which you consider suitable to be a host for your experience, please let us know and we will contact this host and do our best to see if the project meets our basic criteria.

If you would like to understand what we expect from placement hosts and how we select trustworthy projects, please read through the placement host criteria document to avoid any misunderstanding.

How many placements can you go to throughout the Planetary Service Year?

When it comes to choosing which placements to go to, we believe that less is more. Participating in Planetary Service goes hand in hand with contributing to a project working towards social and/or sustainable goals and thus helping out this project reach their targets. Integrating into said project and learning how things work takes time. Especially learning the ins and outs of an organisation or project and fully understanding what is required as well as being able to learn and gain from this experience. Having said this, we also understand that participants may want to have multiple experiences throughout their Planetary Service year, whether within the same volunteering area or within both volunteering areas at different projects. As such, for people who wish to have multiple placement experiences, we recommend choosing a **maximum of three projects** to form the Planetary Service year.

Group/Individual experience

We highly recommend that the Planetary Service experience is done as a group of two to three other Planetary Service participants. We believe that having a shared experience and therefore creating a community, is an amazing way to grow and have an even richer experience in its totality. If you want to do the experience as a group or individually, you will have to specify it on the Application Form on our website. If you are selected as one of the participants, we will meet and put in contact all the participants that want to do the experience as a group for them to organise and decide how the groups are going to be (with our guidance).

Intercultural Exchange

We encourage the participants to go out of their own realities and volunteer in projects and organisations where there can be an intercultural exchange. By doing so, participants can examine and reflect on their own culture, beliefs and world-views. Furthermore, it is a way for participants to see projects and organisations that are working for a better future and experience for themselves that there are points of light and hope all around the world.

We want to make very clear that intercultural experience not always means to go abroad or to another country, it can take different shapes and forms:

- It obviously could take place in a whole different continent or country
- It could also be by volunteering in projects/organisations either local or abroad where there are other international participants or people.
- Or even, if participation happens in the same country, exploring the different cultures that reside there or the cultures from different collectives that cohabit the city or the country.

We would also like to highlight that each project will run in its own way and have its own 'culture', **keeping an open mind, clear communication and respect for one another is key to have the best experience possible.** Of course, if there should be an issue between volunteer and host we are here to help resolve any problems.

Finances, Costs and Insurances

We expect participants to organise and plan their experience and book their own travel methods as well as be responsible for their own travel and health insurance.

Planetary Service is committed to accessibility and recognises that financial accessibility is not equally distributed. Our goal is that there will be funds/support available for those to whom partaking in Planetary Service is limited by finances. As such, we are unfortunately not **yet** able to offer any financial support for we are currently a seedling NGO.

Daily Costs

We want the participants to be in service of the earth and the people in need, having a deep immersion into the volunteering experience for a whole year, and for that to happen they need to have the basic needs met. Participants do not have any daily costs associated with volunteering at a placement project. **Room and board will be offered by host projects in exchange for the participant's time and work contribution. The participant and the host project has to arrange and clarify the practicalities of how food and accommodation are going to be covered and arranged from the very beginning.**

Recording Experience of Planetary Service year

We ask all participants of the prototype year to record their experience in a creative manner. This can take any shape or form you may prefer. The reason we ask for this recording is so that we can adapt and refine the support structure as needed and be able to come together as a year group and share experiences in the check-ins. We would also like to use some material, with your permission, for social media and publicity purposes so we can be able to explain more and better what all this experience is about.

Being part of the evaluation process

For the prototype we will ask the participants to be part of the different evaluation process that will happen through this first trial and polish the idea together with the Planetary Service team. It will always be a guided process and we will basically ask for feedback, inputs and insights from the experience you will be having at the time.

At the end of the year, there will be a final evaluation process in which we will gather all participants from all placements and go through a review process of the year, the placements and the Planetary Service support structure. We are yet to establish how this should take place, the most likely form will be through a guided online meetup and guided review process. Reviewing is essential for restructuring the coming years and assessing what we should improve and how we can become a better movement.

The role of Planetary Service as a Movement

The role of planetary service is to act as an umbrella for all the projects and organisations working for a sustainable future in the areas of earth and people care, creating a big network of projects, organisations and people to connect to and will allow to find support and resources. Furthermore, the planetary service movement will act as a support system for the participants via the mentoring framework design. We are keen on supporting host projects in any problem that may appear during the experience and we would like to have regular input with the project to learn how the project is going from their side. **However we would like to clarify that we do not take legal responsibility for the volunteer that comes to your project or organisation.**

Mentoring Framework

Being a participant with Planetary Service, a part of the volunteering experience, means that you must attend the mentoring framework in its totality to be able to get the certification. Therefore, during your Planetary Service year you will have to be present in the regular online Community Dialogues (weekly or biweekly, it is still to be confirmed), as well as the Learning Sessions (three to four times throughout the year) organised for the participants to have more resources, inspiration and enrichment out of their experience and for them to embody a more sustainable life. The attendance is obligatory and the hosting projects are aware of our mentoring framework and will make the time and space for the participants to be part of it. If there is anything that prevents the individual from attending any session of the mentoring framework it will have to be justified. **There is an 80% of attendance asked of the participants, if they do not reach this percentage, they won't be able to get the certification.**

English Language Proficiency

Given the international nature of Planetary Service we consider it important to have as a minimum a basic level of spoken English. This will be necessary for the learning sessions and community dialogues where Planetary Service participants will meet (online) to check-in and learn from each other's experiences. Further, if you chose to go to a host project in another country where your mother tongue is not the main language used, English will most likely be the communication language. We also expect host projects to be able to communicate with volunteers in English when necessary.

Planetary Service team,
18/5/2023