

## Family Volunteering Guide

Volunteering as a family offers benefits to the overseas project as well as to the parents and children. Families can have a unique experience, immersing themselves in a new culture whilst contributing to an on-going volunteer project in need of support.

Pod Volunteer believes in responsibly matching families to the right placement and we are honest about the challenges that come with volunteering.

We only offer a carefully selected number of placements, where together with our overseas project partners we have identified where families are best suited and able to make a valuable contribution to their ongoing work. The minimum age requirement varies by project reflecting the location, nature of the work, risk levels, volunteer role and support we can provide onsite.

This document is designed to supplement your project's Volunteering Guide.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

**Application:** Each parent / legal guardian should complete a separate application form. Volunteers under the age of 18 do not need to complete an application form. Once you have been accepted onto the project we will ask for additional details for each person under the age of 18, including:

- Full name (as on passport)
- Nationality
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Medical and dietary details
- Next of kin details

**Discount:** There is a £75 discount per child (under 18) for each placement you join.

**Informal phone interview:** For our family volunteers we feel it is important for your dedicated Placement Manager to speak with you, discuss the placement and challenges in more detail and answer any questions you make have. The call normally takes around 10-15 minutes.

**Book your place:** Once you have received your acceptance letter you can secure your place with a deposit of £200 per family member (full payment if 8 weeks or less to your start date)

**Terms and Conditions and Family Declaration:** In addition to our normal Terms and Conditions, we will also ask for a completed Family Declaration. You will need to read through this, sign and send it back to us by email or post accompanied by passport copies for each family.

### CHALLENGES

Whilst volunteering as a family is very rewarding there are also a number of challenges that both adults and children should consider. You should talk through the challenges of the project with all members of the family:

**Timing:** As in all developing countries plans can change frequently and it can appear disorganised at times so it is important to be open-minded and remain flexible. As a family, you will need to be able

to work independently in a new environment where resources support and management structures are often not available.

**Location:** You should also be prepared to work in unfamiliar and, in some cases remote, environments and accept the limitations and challenges that these locations may bring.

**Workload:** Volunteering is not a typical family holiday and you will be expected to complete the normal volunteer role. As you are working in a new environment, this can be tiring and you should ensure you are getting enough rest in your free time.

You can see more detail about these challenges, and challenges specific to the placement you have chosen, in the Volunteer Role Section of your Volunteering Guide.

## FAMILY REQUIREMENTS

- Be in good physical and mental health
- All members of the family group should be willing to embrace the challenges of the project
- Volunteers under the age of 18 should be:
  - Able to complete the normal volunteer role where possible
  - Willing to work with their guardian on daily tasks
- Agree to Pod Volunteers Under 18 Protection Policy (see below)
- Agree to and sign and Pod Volunteer's Family Declaration

## OTHER THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU GO

**Immunisations:** Some immunisations and anti-malarial medication may not be available for children under certain ages. You should discuss this with your doctor or travel clinic.

**Visa:** Some visa requirements and applications may differ for volunteers under the age of 18. We would recommend contacting the (FCO/the country embassy) to look into this further)

**Discounts:** Flight and tour operators may offer discounts for travellers under the age of 18.

**Insurance:** Travel insurance is essential and we require that you have suitable travel insurance. You should ensure that your policy covers children.

## POD VOLUNTEER'S UNDER 18 PROTECTION POLICY

Pod Volunteer has a responsibility to protect Under 18 volunteers at the projects we work in around the world.

Note: Pod Volunteer defines an Under 18 volunteer as an individual under 18 years old who is volunteering on a placement accompanied by a leader or responsible adult (a person over 18 who has agreed to be legally responsible for them throughout the volunteer placement).

The following should never happen:

- Relationships which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- Behaviour which is illegal, abusive or exposes Under 18 volunteers to danger
- Rough or dangerous play, bullying, or the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour

Responsible adults must:

- Take responsibility and manage Under 18 volunteers at all times

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- Follow the local projects' policies and rules
  - Be aware of situations which may present risks and minimise these - and discuss with Under 18 volunteers so that they have a level of awareness too
  - Inform the local staff and/or Pod Volunteer UK office if they witness or suspect inappropriate behaviour by someone else

Under 18 volunteers should:

- Follow the local projects' policies and rules
- Not spend time away from their leader / responsible adult unless planned and agreed with the leader / responsible adult and local project staff
- Not be in a situation where they are not visible to others and could be vulnerable
- Consider situations which may present risks and minimise these
- Inform the local staff and/or Pod Volunteer UK office if they witness or suspect inappropriate behaviour by someone else