

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

ESC Project Title ‘Sustainable Synergies’

- Start date: 08/11/2021
- End date: 05/11/2022
- Duration: 12 months (long term volunteering)
- Place: Nea Makri, Attiki, Greece
- Profile of volunteer: 18-30 years, available for the full period of the ESC, with residence in Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Germany and Sweden, or any other ESC eligible country.
- Application: Please send your CV and Motivation Letter via email to **(Sending Organization email)** with the subject ‘ESC – Sustainable Synergies, 2021-22’.
- The pre-selected candidates will be interviewed (via skype).

Financial Conditions

- Travel costs – A maximum of 360 Euro for flights and local transport while arriving and departing from Nea Makri (275 if arriving from Italy or Germany).
- Pocket Money – The volunteer will receive a monthly amount of 150 Euro of pocket money.

Insurance

European Commission provides insurance coverage to the volunteers of the European Voluntary Service through Cigna Health Insurance provider. Participants enrollment in Cigna shall take place at least 15 days before the date of the beginning of the European Voluntary Service. The enrollment constitutes a responsibility of the Sending Organization.

Accommodation

The volunteer will share a common living space with other volunteers in a co-housing project in Nea Makri, with dormitory style accommodation (a maximum of three volunteers per room).

Food

Our organization will support volunteers for food provision via a weekly shopping-list. The food will be sourced with emphasis on organic and ethical production and responsible consumerism. Fresh fruit and vegetables will be sourced from our farm and other organic farms nearby, while the rest of the food supplies will be provided by local shops or a Solidarity Trade Food Cooperative in Athens that collaborates with small organic producers from all over the country.

Host Organization

Our work at the School of the Earth ‘Nea Guinea’ focuses on our belief that human activity as a whole can be part of the natural environment and become a regenerative factor for the local communities and ecosystems that surround it. Our primary goal is to explore and study balanced and meaningful connections with nature and the people around us, aiming at the emergence of a new culture with local characteristics based on solidarity and respect for life as a whole. Our

activities are aimed at developing tools and practices that promote resilience and self-reliance on an individual as well as on a collective level, and at the same time at supporting people and communities in the transition to a sustainable lifestyle.

More info: <http://neaguinea.org> & <http://neaguinea.org/2016/08/01/english/> & <http://neaguinea.org/2018/11/16/sustainable-synergies-evs-in-nea-guinea/>

Project Description

The “Sustainable Synergies” project is a core part of our work and emphasizes on raising awareness on environmental and social challenges within the local community and promoting active engagement in sustainable and regenerative practices with a positive environmental impact. It focuses on the development and dissemination of techniques and practices that promote creative interaction between the people of our local community regarding issues of sustainable food production, renewable energy systems, cultural and environmental regeneration and creative environmental activism. Using tools like permaculture design, non formal education, skill sharing, non violent communication and sociocracy we aim at creating the conditions for an open synergistic process that consists of diverse creative activities and promotes active experiential learning as well as positive inter-cultural interaction.

During the project, young volunteers from Italy, Spain, France, Portugal, Germany and Sweden (or any other ESC eligible country) will join the School of the Earth in our farming activities, and four volunteers will stay with us for 12 months in order to experience a full year of Permaculture and sustainable living. The volunteer activities of the ‘Sustainable Synergies’ project are designed in such a way so as to create a learning process that offers community benefit while providing a variety of informal and non-formal methods to generate learning. The participants will acquire or improve their skills in active participation, while operating in a multicultural environment which promotes and develops attitudes of cooperation, solidarity and respect of cultural diversity. Particular organizational and practical hands-on skills will be developed by the volunteers in the planning, facilitation and implementation of raising awareness events and skill sharing workshops on Social Permaculture and non violent communication, Permaculture food production systems design and electricity production from renewable energy.

We expect the project participants to acquire new skills and knowledge on applied sustainability, which will grant them well equipped for an engagement with environmental tasks of all kinds, both on a community activist level as well as in a professional environment. In collaboration with our project partners Servei Civil Internacional de Catalunya in Spain, Associação Spin in Portugal, Associazione Interculturale NUR in Italy and Via Brachy in France, Nachhaltiger in Germany and RELEARN Suderbyn in Sweden, we envisage to create a fertile environment for youth mobility in Europe in order to promote, develop and apply sustainability in practice.

Tasks of Volunteers

The ‘Sustainable Synergies’ project emphasizes raising awareness on environmental and social challenges within the local community and that of the main city of Athens, as well as promoting active engagement in sustainable and regenerative practices with positive environmental and social impact, that will address diagnosed local social and environmental challenges. Issues of sustainable food production, renewable energy systems, cultural & environmental regeneration and creative

social & environmental activism, will be addressed among others. In order to achieve the above mentioned goals, the activities in which the volunteers will be involved consist of the following:

- Participation in the planning, organization and facilitation of raising awareness events regarding current social and environmental issues as well as cultural and environmental regeneration strategies for the local community on a weekly basis;
- Participation in the planning organization and facilitation of skill sharing workshops on Social Permaculture and non violent communication, Permaculture food production systems design and renewable energy production for the local community on a weekly basis;
- Study, research and documentation on the adaptation of different Permaculture cultivation techniques and methods on the Mediterranean climate and dissemination of the learning outcomes to the local community through open informative events and workshops;
- Study, research and documentation on seed preservation and development of a collective seed bank with local varieties of vegetable and herb seeds that will be supplied and will be retrofitted by the local community;
- Participation in Garden design, construction and maintenance activities along with members of the local community and the organization's members on the farm on a weekly basis, that facilitate sharing and exchanging of different methods and practices between community members while featuring rich agricultural traditions of minority groups within the local community;
- Participation in planning, organization and facilitation of cooking and food processing activities using vegetables produced in School of the Earth farm that facilitate sharing and exchanging of different methods and practices between community members while featuring rich food cultures of minority groups within the local community;
- Participation in the School of the Earth's internal activities: weekly plenum, team development activities (sessions to review goals and aims, development of new concepts and initiatives, etc), team and networking meetings, developing and maintaining digital communication channels (newsletter, blogs, face book page and others).

Everyday activities can include:

- Garden design, construction and maintenance activities on the farm.
- Study, research and documentation on the adaptation of different Permaculture cultivation techniques and methods on the Mediterranean climate.
- Collective seed bank project: study, research, documentation and practical activities.
- Renewable energy related activities: Study, research, documentation and hands on practical applications.
- Raising awareness events and open cooking and food processing facilitation activity on the farm.

- Skill sharing workshop facilitation on the farm (on topics of Social Permaculture, Non violent communication, Permaculture food production systems design and Renewable energy production).
- Within the co-housing project: Non violent communication and Social Permaculture group activities and language and digital skills workshops.

These activities are designed in such a way that they make up a learning service that offers community benefit while providing a variety of informal and non-formal methods to generate learning. Furthermore, the activities offer the project participants plenty of space for interaction with peers from the School of the Earth's members' circle as well as the local community.

The volunteers will work on the different projects at an average of 30 hours per week.

Volunteer Requirements

Volunteer candidates are expected to have some experience with volunteering within their own country and are likely to have undergone placements within their sending organizations. They are also expected to have a strong interest in environmental issues and volunteerism, an ability to live and work as part of a multicultural team of volunteers, have an interest in intercultural experiences, have a commitment to developing links with the communities in which they are placed, have a commitment to using the experiences and skills gained during the program to benefit their own community, have the ability to work in a suburban small town like Nea Marki, have excellent computer skills (such as word processing, spreadsheets, using social media and internet) and have an excellent level of English.

Candidates are expected to complete an *application form* through which relevant information about their skills, suitability for the placement and commitment to the environmental, intercultural and community elements of the program will be collected.

Communications and Emergencies

The volunteer receives a detailed welcome pack upon arrival where he/she can find useful emergency numbers as well as other relevant information regarding local everyday life. Once the volunteer arrives he/she will attend a one-day orientation session along with the co-housing group, where necessary instructions and measures for safety in the house will be addressed. The volunteer will be provided with the mobile phone numbers of his/her mentor and of the ESC program coordinator and he/she will be able to use these numbers 24 hours a day 7 days a week, if necessary.

Things to consider before applying for an ESC placement

It is wise to have some money on the side before coming to Greece. The pocket money and food provided is adequate for your ESC placement, but might not allow you to easily explore Greece or meet with friends in other cities. In addition, your ESC insurance will not pay for any healthcare in advance, as long as you are not administered in the hospital. This means that you will have to pay in advance for your healthcare and have to wait some weeks before receiving the reimbursement. With this in mind, it is recommended that you have some other financial resources in addition to the basic ESC allowance during your stay.

European Solidarity Corps

In order to strengthen the cohesion and foster the solidarity in European society, the European Solidarity Corps has been set up by the European Commission to create a community of young people willing to engage in a wide range of solidarity activities, either by volunteering or gaining occupational experience in helping to resolve challenging situations across the European Union and beyond. For activities falling within the scope of the European Solidarity Corps (i.e. services lasting 2 to 12 months), partner organizations select their ESC volunteers making use of the European Solidarity Corps database. For this reason, we encourage all potential volunteers to register with the European Solidarity Corps at <https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity>