

## Responsible Travel Policy

**people and places** was established to recruit and place volunteers in local projects run by local people for the benefit of their communities and their environment. **people and places** is not run for the benefit of shareholders. All profits after operating expenses are covenanted for charitable purposes and used to serve the needs of the communities with whom we work. **people and places** has no political or religious affiliations.

Our core values are mutual respect, service, partnership, transparency and sustainability [1]. We believe that people who are willing and able to contribute their expertise, skills and time for the benefit of others, should be provided with quality volunteering opportunities and be well supported in their volunteering.

Individual projects are proposed by local partners and personally assessed by **people and places** before we proceed to recruit and place volunteers. The local partners are local people who are part of their local community; they ensure that the volunteering experience is good for the community and/or their environment, as well as for the volunteers for whom they provide a high level of care. Where there is any possibility, however remote, that the projects may involve working with children or vulnerable adults, we screen volunteers through the Disclosure Service of the UK Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and equivalent enquiries for volunteers who are nationals of other countries.

**people and places** is overseen by an advisory committee that includes professionals and experts in the fields of education, health care and social work.

## Social Responsibility

- Our starting point for every one of the projects is the local community – the needs of the community and the local project are paramount. Only with a comprehensive understanding of the community and the project will **people and places** match volunteers to placements.
- We exercise due diligence on each project and local partner with whom we work before we offer placements for volunteers. We also exercise due diligence in the matching of people and places – each volunteer is individually matched to each individual project
- The sustainability of your volunteer input is vital. Each project is programme-driven to ensure sustainability and avoid dependency. On **people and places** projects volunteer placements do not reduce, inhibit or jeopardise local employment.
- **people and places** volunteers work alongside local employees, **not** instead of them. Each volunteer is comprehensively prepared for the new cultural experience. We ensure that appropriate reading matter is recommended, there is a full pre-placement briefing and in-situ orientation briefing including basic language, local customs and appropriate conduct, child protection issues and in depth information about the project and its needs.
- **people and places** is committed to equal opportunities, and strives to locate appropriate experiences for less physically able volunteers.

## Economic Responsibility

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- The fee for your volunteer trip is paid directly to our local partner – unless otherwise requested or agreed by the local partner, in the country where you are volunteering. **people and places** is paid a fee – clearly shown on each project description - for which we provide our recruitment and placement service.
- We practice transparency in all our working practises. Each project is costed individually and is published with an explanation of how your money is spent and distributed within the local community.
- Each volunteer makes a donation to the project to ensure that their volunteering does not require a local subsidy for labour, materials etc. – details of these donations and

what the money will be spent on are provided separately for each volunteering experience.

- We ensure that as high a percentage as possible of all volunteer spend benefits the local community and remains within that community. We recommend locally owned accommodation, and ensure that wherever possible all board, food, transport, supplies etc. are sourced, bought and paid for locally.

### Environmental Responsibility

- In our office we reduce, reuse and recycle paper. We use recycled paper and keep print to a minimum. We recycle our ink cartridges through the [Woodland Trust](#).
- We encourage our independent local partners with whom we work to adopt similar environmental policies. However, local voluntary initiatives may sometimes find it difficult to adopt these practises.
- We support environmental and alternative technology projects.
- We encourage volunteers to offset the carbon emissions from their flights through [Friends of Conservation](#) or the [Woodland Trust](#)

### Our Responsibility to the projects

- We provide selected and screened volunteers with the appropriate skills to assist projects.
- We work closely with local partners to meet their needs for a sustainable flow of volunteers in maintaining and developing their projects.
- We provide briefing in the UK which complements the in-country briefing provided by our local partners, and we enable returned volunteers to network together and to be in contact with volunteers going out to the same projects.

### Our Responsibility to volunteers

- We work to ensure that your volunteering experience is as meaningful and worthwhile as possible, both for you and for the project on which you work.
- Each volunteer has full 24-hour emergency contact details and support from our local partners, backed up by UK support from **people and places**.
- We provide high quality volunteering experiences and take your feedback seriously. This helps us in enhancing the experience for future volunteers and in maximising the positive impact of your contribution.
- We provide opportunities for volunteers to network with each other and produce a quarterly electronic newsletter to assist this process.

[1] We are aware that there is a 'radical' critique of volunteering as neo-colonialism. Sometimes this critique goes beyond name calling. We are happy to debate our practise - only through critical reflection and debate can we further develop and refine our approach.