

## **MONDO VOLUNTEERS PROGRAMME**

### ***FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS***

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Mondo Challenge Foundation has an enviable track record in running quality volunteering programmes around the world for many years. More recently our volunteering work is focussed on supporting established projects run by partners in Nepal, India and Tanzania.

We work closely with these partners to ensure that we match skilled volunteers with education and development work which can really benefit both the hosts and volunteers. The partners set the parameters of the volunteering placement.

The application process is handled by our Volunteer Coordinator, Anna Brian, from the UK. Anna began her career in development with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) in Vietnam. Since then she has worked as an education consultant and a programme manager, living for six years in Uganda and Mozambique. During her career, she has designed and managed programmes in education, livelihoods, HIV/AIDs support and emergency response. She joined Mondo in July 2015. You can contact Anna at [anna.brian@mondofoundation.org](mailto:anna.brian@mondofoundation.org)

Anna is the main point of contact for Mondo volunteering placements, she liaises closely with country managers and will be able to answer any questions you have.

In the meantime, we hope this Frequently Asked Questions sheet will help you as you make your decision as to whether to apply as a volunteer with Mondo.

#### **❶ WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO I NEED TO VOLUNTEER?**

We consider applications from all sorts of people and try to match your skills to our projects. However, we do particularly welcome applications from qualified teachers (primary, secondary, EFL) or those with experience of working with children. All volunteers must be DBS checked.

#### **❷ WHAT ARE THE COSTS INVOLVED IN VOLUNTEERING?**

We ask volunteers to cover the cost of their travel to and from the project location, including international flights, transport to the project site (up to £70) and overnight hotel stays (around £30). Once at the school, volunteers stay with local families and pay them around £24 a week which covers all meals and (simple) accommodation. Volunteer applicants will also be asked to cover the cost of a DBS check (£12). You also need to take out comprehensive travel insurance.

All these are direct costs of your volunteering which you need to pay directly to the relevant organisation. We are not a commercial organisation and charge no fee to our volunteers. There are of course, however, costs in running both our local operations and

supporting our volunteer programme in the UK and the many programmes we run for the schools have considerable cost. We therefore require all our volunteers to raise a minimum of £300 each to support our work. Like all our donations the vast majority will be spent on direct activity with our partner schools. We ask volunteers to raise this money **before** volunteering and the post may be withdrawn if a sufficient contribution is not made.

### **③ WHAT TIME COMMITMENT DO I NEED TO MAKE?**

We ask volunteers to make a minimum commitment of 4 weeks. However, we find that staying for longer is more satisfying for the volunteer and more beneficial to the projects, as it allows time for the volunteer to get to know the local culture and school and to really make an impact. Volunteers have stayed with Mondo for up to six months, but longer is also possible!

### **④ WHERE DO VOLUNTEERS STAY?**

Volunteers stay with local families, often the headteacher of the school where they work, or a member of Mondo staff. They have their own room, but accommodation is simple (outside shower/ toilet, irregular electricity supply.)

### **⑤ HOW CAN I BE SURE MY VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE MAKES A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE?**

At Mondo, we are aware that there are important ethical and safeguarding issues involved in sending volunteers to parts of the world and we work closely with our partners to make sure that the volunteers involvement is first and foremost needed and valued at the local level. Over the years, we hear time and time again from country partners that the volunteers who come make a tremendous practical difference and are appreciated.

We are also committed to ensuring that volunteers benefit from working and learning about education in another context and promote reciprocal learning throughout the placement. To that end, we ask volunteers to complete a short evaluation report on their return and hope that they will help Mondo in its future work through promoting the charity and helping to raise funds.

We interview prospective volunteers, take up references and ensure that volunteers are checked against the Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) to ensure that they are suitable to work with vulnerable young people. We also make sure they have good indication and supervision during their placement.

We never place volunteers in orphanages and in our schools volunteers will always work with groups of children with the oversight of a teacher. We do not allow volunteers to sponsor an individual child they have been working with, though we do encourage the volunteer to maintain a relationship with Mondo and the school after the placement. You can read about some of the experiences from past Volunteers on our website

There are several good practice guides for volunteering abroad and these guides have informed our volunteers policy and approach. Click on the links below to access some of

these guides and articles so you can be informed as to some of the wider issues involved in volunteering.

[Sending Volunteers abroad – good practice checklist.](#)

[Volunteer placements in development: 10 ways to make them count](#)

[International Volunteering Organisational Code of Practice](#)

## **⑥ WHAT OTHER SKILLS COULD YOUR PROJECTS USE?**

Although our main work is in the fields of Education and Livelihoods Training, we have placed volunteers who are not teachers but who have valuable experience in wider areas. If you have experience in wider international development work, research and evaluation skills, experience of designing websites or marketing materials, fundraising, writing news articles or quality management systems do let us know as there can be opportunities to help at the offices of our country partners or even in the UK.

## **⑦ IF I WANT TO APPLY, WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?**

Send us an enquiry via the website, telling us (in a few lines) a little bit about yourself. We will get back to you with an application form and further information. Once you have filled in the form, we will arrange an interview with one of the Mondo UK staff to talk about your skills and possible placements. Then, if you wish to go forward, we will liaise with our project staff in India, Nepal and Tanzania to find the best opportunity for you. You will be responsible for organising your own travel and insurance, but once you give us your flight details we can help you to arrange transfer from the airport/ station to your project.

## **⑧ CAN I TALK TO A VOLUNTEER WHO HAS COMPLETED A VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT?**

Yes, this is one of the best ways to get an idea of what is involved and what other volunteers have done. We can link you with a past volunteer before you go so you can build on the work already been done and learn from a volunteer's previous experience. We always find that when volunteers return home they have learnt so much which has enriched their lives.

See [www.mondofoundation.org/volunteer-profiles](http://www.mondofoundation.org/volunteer-profiles) for stories from previous volunteers.

If you have any further questions Anna can help.

We hope you will want to volunteer with us and look forward to hearing from you.