

### **Introduction to Veraldarvinir – Worldwide Friends Iceland**

Worldwide Friends (WF) was founded in 2001 as a non-profit, non governmental organization promoting peace, friendship and international understanding. We host short-term voluntary workcamps, long-term voluntary projects (3-7 months), seminars (suitable both for young people and adults), Youth Exchanges, educational programmes and campaigns in Iceland. We also send Icelandic volunteers intending to have similar experiences abroad.

Veraldarvinir/WF works with **three main aims**:

to promote inter-cultural learning, exchange and awareness

to care for Icelandic nature and raise awareness of environmental issues

to promote voluntary work and a culture of volunteering.

Our **main office** is located in the following address:

Veraldarvinir  
Einarsnes 56  
101 Reykjavík  
Iceland

This year we will have representatives in each region in Iceland to secure the quality of the workcamps and to provide the local communities and our volunteers a better programme.

**Sources of income:** Our incomes are mainly coming from the following sources: The Youth in action programme, local communities all around Iceland, Icelandic Foundations and funds, fees from the participants in our workcamps in Iceland.

### **General information about our International workcamps**

**Age limit:** In general our volunteers should be 18 years and in most of the camps there are no maximum limits.

**The work:** In most cases the workcamps are for two weeks. The working hours are usually about 30 - 35 hours a week (for example six/seven hours a day about five days a week). Exceptions are mentioned in the descriptions.

**Accommodation:** Usually we are staying in local community centers, schools, youth centers or sometimes in family houses. The conditions are in general really good and with all facilities like kitchen and toilets. In some cases we will have to take a shower in the local swimming pool.

**Food:** Food will be provided and the volunteers are expected to do their fair share of the cooking/cleaning.

**Camp language:** English is the language in our camps. The volunteers only need to have a basic knowledge in the language. If the camp language is not English, it will be mentioned in the description. This year we are hosting one camp with French as a language (WF21)

**Camp leaders:** There are always one to two leaders in each camp. They are the link between the host and the group of volunteers. They are coordinating the work, organizing free time activities, excursions, shopping and cooking. Apart from these responsibilities they are equal to the other volunteers.

Most of our camp leaders are foreigners and we are very open minded in hosting international leaders from other organizations.

**Extra participation fee:** There is an extra fee in many of our camps this year. We are still looking for support for many of the camps so it is still possible that in some cases the fee will be lower than written. We will update you about those changes if luckily that will happen. The fee has to be paid by volunteers upon arrival to the camp.

**Insurance:** Veraldarvinir provides a basic insurance for the volunteers during the duration of the camp. We strongly recommend the volunteers who plan to travel beyond these dates to take out their own insurance. European volunteers have to bring the European Health Card (former E111).

**Some practical matters:** We highly recommend the volunteers to bring sleeping bag, work clothes, hiking shoes and swimming suit, but also warm clothes and waterproof clothes. Volunteers are also asked to bring information about their country, photos, music, songbooks, games, musical instruments, etc.

Volunteers with special needs: Our camps are open to everyone. If you have volunteers with special needs or with fewer opportunities than please contact us. We will do our very best to find a way to host them.

**Information sheet:** We will send out detailed information sheet with practical information and camp details the latest four weeks before the camp starts.

**Getting to the campsite:** Public transportation is not really good in Iceland and rather expensive. We will organize a minibus ride from Reykjavik to the camps which are far away from Reykjavik. The participants can choose by themselves if they want to join the minibus option. The fees for the minibus will be published in the infosheets. However, they will be cheaper than public transportation in all of the cases. This is a good change for the campers to get to know each other before the camp start and to discover some of the unknown and non-touristical places on the way to the camp. Every participant that takes the minibus has to let us know before the workcamp starts.

**Study Theme:** In all our camps we will have discussions about the environment and how important it is to take care of it on a daily basis. It is necessary to take action on a local level to help address this very global issue. Although climate change seem like a complex issue there is a wide variety of simple actions that every individual and community can take to make a difference. Energy conservation, educational programs, planting trees, walk to work and waste reduction. Those actions are just few of the possible options that we can choose from in our daily life. In some of our camps we will also have a study theme related to the history of Iceland and the mystical beings or the ancient heritage of the Scandinavian mythology.