

## **DEPAUL EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS VOLUNTEERING:**

European Solidarity Corps (ESC) volunteering projects are part of Erasmus+, which is a European Commission funded programme for lifelong learning and volunteering in Europe. As you might know, the ESC programme was formerly known as EVS, and allows young people aged 18-30 to volunteer in a non-profit organisation in a country other than their home country.

Depaul is a homelessness charity, which provides accommodation and services to individuals and families at risk or caught in the spiral of homelessness. Some of our residents may have complex problems such as physical or mental health issues, or dependency on drugs or alcohol.

Depaul has involved volunteers on these programmes since 2004, so we have a wealth of experience of hosting and managing young people from abroad. European Solidarity Corps volunteers in Dublin join us for 12 months and spend 30-35 hrs per week volunteering. Depaul provides training, supervision & mentoring as part of your weekly volunteering hours.

## **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS PLACEMENT WITH DEPAUL:**

You will gain a broad range of experience that should prove extremely beneficial to your future life and personal development. These include:

- Improved learning performance
- Enhanced employability and improved career prospects
- Increased sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Increased self-empowerment and self esteem
- Improved foreign language competences
- Enhanced intercultural awareness
- More active participation in society
- Better awareness of the EU project and EU values
- Increased motivation for taking part in future (formal/non-formal) education or training later on
- A greater understanding of social issues in Ireland, particularly homelessness, mental health support and addiction.

You will be assigned a supervisor, based in the project, who is familiar with the tasks required of full-time volunteers and will be able to guide and support you in the project.

A mentor will be assigned to you; a member of the Volunteer Department, who is responsible for your personal support, checking in on you in your project and outside of it. You will also have opportunities to experience other projects, integrate into the local community, to meet other young people to socialize and to participate in leisure activities.

ESC participation is free for the volunteers, and you will also receive accommodation, insurance cover, transport costs and an allowance for the duration of the project.

## WHAT DEPAUL EXPECTS FROM YOU:

- A commitment of 12-months volunteering, for approx. 30-35 hours per week
- Ability to work with vulnerable people from a wide variety of backgrounds
- Openness to engage with service users and learn about their interests and needs in order to offer the activities that best meet these needs
- Willingness to be flexible in your daily work and to take initiative when needed
- Work with a variety of staff, other volunteers and students
- Share your culture and customs with our services, through music, art, food etc.
- Bring energy, enthusiasm and a willingness to learn!

Volunteers with Depaul provide added-value activities and do not replace paid employees. As a volunteer, you will be given a set of clearly defined tasks, with scope allowed for integrating your own ideas, creativity and experiences into the project. We will compose an Activity Agreement between you, your Sending Organisation and us, which outlines your time commitment and activities.

## OUR SERVICES

When you apply you can indicate your preference for which service you would most like to be based in. We will allocate volunteers based on your skills and experience, to meet the needs of all of our services.

- **Sundial House:** a long-term housing project providing accommodation for up to 30 people who have experienced extended periods of street homelessness and have entrenched alcohol issues. Residents have their own rooms, meals are provided on-site, and there are a variety of communal spaces for activities such as a TV room, games room, arts & crafts space, and a rooftop garden.
- **Back Lane:** provides a mixture of emergency, short-term and long-term accommodation for 60 homeless men. Residents have their own rooms, meals are provided on-site and residents have access to communal spaces such as a snooker and pool room, library, television lounge and large garden.
- **Peter's Place:** offers 35 self-contained apartments for young people aged 18-35 experiencing homelessness. There is a strong focus on resettlement and residents are encouraged to learn independent life skills such as budgeting, cooking etc. Many are engaged in employment or education programmes. There are communal living rooms with cooking facilities and many activities take place off site such as sports and cultural outings.
- **Orchid House:** providing supported temporary accommodation for up to 23 men, women and couples with entrenched alcohol issues and complex needs. Residents have their own rooms, meals are provided on-site, and there are communal spaces for activities such as TV rooms and a small rooftop garden.
- **Tus Nua:** supports women leaving prison by providing a support programme aimed at assisting transition to independent living in the community. The women have their own rooms and share a communal kitchen, living rooms and garden. The women are encouraged to take a positive role in their community and volunteer activities focus on developing life skills, especially cooking and outings.

## WHAT DO VOLUNTEERS DO?

Your principle role will be to encourage our service users to participate in meaningful activities within the projects and also with the local community. The most important thing our volunteers do is build good supportive relationships with our service users.

ESC volunteers form a special relationship with our service users and can often identify service users' needs, skills and interests and feed back to the team. You will get involved in many different activities, the aim of which is to boost the skills and self-esteem of our service users.

Volunteers bring their own skills and abilities to the role. You will have opportunities to bring your own interests and abilities to your placement, and perhaps to develop new ones! For example:

- Art, crafts or music workshops
- Life Skills classes like basic literacy & numeracy, computers, cookery, job skills
- Games and quizzes
- Film Night, fitness classes, cultural awareness, family activities
- Organising seasonal events (Halloween, Christmas etc)
- Helping the overall organisation with events

A typical week could look something like this:

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday (7 hour day)	Socialising with the service users in the host project. Playing pool or cards.	Preparation of the art and crafts materials followed by workshop	Free
Tuesday (7 hour day)	Accompanying a service user to the local shops.	Attendance at Team meeting.	Free
Wednesday (6 hour day)	Working at another Depaul project with another EVS volunteer on a cultural project.	Free	Quiz Night
Thursday (6 hour day)	Free	Meeting with staff & volunteers to prepare for a trip to a local park with service users.	Music Night
Friday (7 hour day)	Morning Breakfast Club	Working with service users on health promotion project	
Saturday	Day Off		
Sunday	Day Off		

## INTERESTED? THE NEXT STEPS ARE:

- Sign up to the European Solidarity Corps: [https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en)
- Find a reputable Sending Organisation, if you do not already have one in mind. You can find more information here: [https://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/evs-organisation\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/volunteering/evs-organisation_en)
- Complete and return our Application Form, available on this website; make it as detailed as you can! Return it to us by 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2019, and we will be in touch!