

Multilateral Youth Xchange

Global Xchange is a partnership programme managed by the British Council and VSO as well as a range of partners worldwide.

Introduction

The Global Youth Xchange programme is an exciting six-month international exchange which gives young people from different countries a unique opportunity to work together, to develop and share valuable skills and to make a practical contribution where it is needed in local communities.

Global Xchange aims to support the development of active global citizens, committed to working for positive change within communities.

Multilateral Youth Xchange

The Belfast-Durban Multilateral Youth Xchange will work with 20 young people (aged 18-25) from five participating countries: UK (Belfast), South Africa (Durban), France (Paris), Sierra Leone (Freetown) and the USA (LA). The exchange will take place between October 2010 and March 2011.

Volunteers live with host families and work in volunteer placements in host communities for 3 months in Durban, South Africa (Oct-Dec) and 3 months (Jan-March) in Belfast. They will live and work in cross-cultural counterpart pairs and the exchange is designed as a fully reciprocal volunteer programme, involving cross-cultural partnerships in every aspect of our work.

Host Homes info

Living in a host home is much more than food and shelter for the volunteers. It is an integral part of the programme that contributes to the volunteers' learning. For hosts it is an opportunity to share local culture and learn about others' cultures, and create links with other local hosts as well as countries overseas.

Requirements/expectations of hosts

- An interest in living and learning with the volunteers
- Be able to host 2 volunteers– volunteers can share a room and we can provide a bed if needed.
- Be able to host for between 2 and 12 weeks.
- Be able to provide breakfast, lunch & dinner – volunteers can cook for themselves where necessary (£100 per week, per pair is given to cover food and utilities costs).
- Anyone can host – single people, couples, parents with children, older people, single parents, friends...
- You are not expected to entertain the volunteers – they should become a normal part of the “family” and contribute to household chores etc as required
- The volunteers have to take responsibility for making their stay in a host home successful.

Exchange Theme

“Living Our Differences Together”

Cross-cultural dialog for community development and social change

The thinking behind this theme is that volunteers will explore the issues that are affecting their societies (including conflict, race, religion and poverty) and learn to understand the factors that have given rise to issues and identify ways to address and tackle these issues for the good of communities.

Core Components of the Programme

Counterpart Pairs

As a team, volunteers live and work in cross-cultural pairs and alongside each other for six months, spending three months in Belfast and three months in South Africa. Volunteers live with local host homes and volunteer for 4 days a week on a diverse range of local community projects.

Volunteer Placements

Specific examples of volunteer placements have included working with local authority youth and environmental services; working on fair trade campaigns; working alongside people with disabilities; working with children and young people at risk of exclusion from school; working on small scale social enterprise and community regeneration projects.

The placements are usually only for 4 days a week as the fifth day of the working week is given over to informal education workshops (called global citizenship days) which are run by and for the volunteers themselves. These days focus on development awareness and intercultural dialogue.

Global Citizenship Days

The volunteers focus their learning around a 'Global Citizenship Framework', which was developed in association with Oxfam, and covers five key areas:

Poverty and Inequality – Diversity – Community Development – Volunteering – Social Action

Becoming a host home

If you would like to find out more please just get in touch by email or on the number below. I can send you a form to complete and then we'll arrange a good time for me to come and have a chat at your home.

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