

Project title:	<b>Green HI Hostels / Græn Farfuglaheimili</b>
Coordinating and hosting organisation:	<b>HI Iceland / Farfuglar ses.</b>
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## HI Iceland, background and experience

Farfuglar ses – Hostelling International (HI) Iceland has a long and positive experience hosting EVS volunteers. Since 2006 HI Iceland has hosted 20 long term volunteers in the Green HI Hostels project and gained sufficient experience, confidence and capabilities to coordinate and host at the same time volunteers.

The Green Hostels project received the award for excellence in volunteer projects in the European Youth Week 2011, of which we are very proud and makes us very confident in developing new projects and opportunities. HI Iceland has the possibility to support the volunteers and provide them with a meaningful learning experience during their stay.

HI Iceland is a non-governmental and non-profit membership organization established in 1939. The organisation is a member of Hostelling International (HI), a global network of Youth Hostel Associations, of over 4000 hostels with members in more than 80 countries. Membership means that the Icelandic HI hostels fulfil the international standards for HI Hostels. Its mission as stated in its constitution:

*Opening the World to Youth: "To promote the education of all young people of all nations, but specially young people of limited means, by encouraging in them a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside and an appreciation of the cultural values of towns and cities in all parts of the world, and as an ancillary thereto, to provide hostels or other accommodation in which there shall be no distinction of race, nationality, colour, religion, sex, class or political opinions and thereby to develop a better understanding of their fellow men, both at home and abroad."*

Since its inception the organisation's main goal has been to promote and encourage people of all ages to travel and to increase their knowledge and appreciation of nature and culture.

The Hostel network enables young people of different nationalities, cultures and social background to meet informally, share experiences, learn about themselves, each other and their surroundings. Hostels foster a remarkable international awareness about current issues such as environmental issues, sustainable tourism and sustainable development as a whole.

Hostelling also has a fundamental, but unofficial, role in the development of young people as future employees in a global market. The hostel environment encourages social awareness and the importance of living in a community, plus it develops the kind of self-discipline skills that result from experiencing different situations, having to make individual decisions and learning from them.

The organization has slowly but surely grown, owning now 3 hostels in Reykjavík (Reykjavík City Hostel, Reykjavík Downtown Hostel and Reykjavík Loft Hostel), 1 hostel in Borgarnes, and every year in cooperation with 30 franchised hostels around the country. Additionally, HI Iceland runs the Reykjavík Campsite and Slyppugil campsite in Þórsmörk.

In April 2016, the Board of HI Iceland has adopted a new Mission, Vision and Sustainability Policy which reinforces the organization's commitment to bring its contribution to sustainable tourism in Iceland.

The organization's newly adopted vision is:

*„To be at the forefront of sustainable and responsible tourism and the first choice for those who choose to travel with the interests of nature in mind as well as respect for fellow travellers and hosts.“*

Additionally, HI Iceland, has hosted interns during the last 14 years: through an agreement with Dutch, Latvian and Danish Universities – every year 4 to 8 interns arrive to the Reykjavík Hostels for periods of time between 3 and 6 months. These interns are in the same age range as within the Youth in Action Program (between 18 and 30 years old) and they are doing their internship in reception, housekeeping, breakfast etc.

## Green HI Hostels

### Objectives and goals

The main aim of the project is to raise awareness about sustainability issues among international guests of HI Iceland, the staff of the HI hostels and the local community by maintaining the already developed sustainability policy of HI Iceland and developing new ways to increase sustainability consciousness in the daily activities of the HI hostels.

The aim within the leading team of HI Iceland has been to make the Reykjavik Hostels a model of excellence in the field of quality management and a leader in sustainable management. We have worked constantly on developing and implementing the Hostels' own Sustainability Policy and methods in all daily work for many years now.

It has now come the moment when the aim developed to a broader perspective, which includes active participation in the community and cultural side.

All 3 Reykjavík Hostels are proud holders of the Nordic Swan Ecolabel which demonstrates that a product or service is a good environmental choice. To become Swan certified is a long process, in which is necessary to adapt the business to a comprehensive set of green rules and requirements, which are not static but change with time in order to comply with the newest legislative and new green trends. More info here: [www.nordic-ecolabel.org](http://www.nordic-ecolabel.org).

The biggest challenge now is to train and maintain the system on the long-term and find ways how to promote the vision to our guests in a more diverse and colourful way in order to positively influence them during their travel within our beautiful fragile nature.

HI Iceland is concerned about the environment and the objectives of sustainable tourism, sustainable development and use of resources. An environmental agenda has been developed and the HI Hostel aim at passing knowledge to guests and members of the local community on an even broader scale. One of the ways in which the HI Hostels differ from just any budget accommodation provider, is that there exists the aim to create a "green" and environment-aware atmosphere in the HI Hostels, promoting in the same time the principles of sustainable tourism as whole, by actively engaging in the local community and having a stronger impact at the local level.

The HI Hostels are establishments that provide budget accommodation, promoting the movement of youth throughout the world, with emphasis upon encounters and understanding between people. With a tradition of intercultural exchange and the practice of a communal lifestyle, HI Hostels exist as places of learning, listening and discovery. Moreover, the hostels offer an environment particularly well suited to school groups with collective dormitories, classrooms/meeting rooms and a board service.

### Key role and main activities

The volunteers, that participate in the Green HI Hostels project, are called *Green messengers*. Their role is to explore different ways of promoting sustainability in the HI Hostels. This can be done in various ways and we are open to new ideas of the Green messengers that contribute to the sustainability work of HI Iceland.

Three Green messengers take part in the project at each time. Two are already working on the project so at this point we are looking for the third participant in the team. It is to be noted that the three simultaneously working volunteers would share the tasks and in that way gain experience which will benefit and inspire them in the different fields of the project, as well as in the future.

The objectives of the activities proposed are in harmony with the project's objectives and main aim, which is to raise awareness about sustainability issues, among the international guests of HI Iceland, staff and local community. Overall the main task of the volunteer is looking for new ways of spreading the eco consciousness and developing new activities of promoting Icelandic culture and help visitors and locals alike to increase their appreciation and understanding of it.

The volunteers learn not only to be creative and express themselves on a topic of their interest, but they also learn practical day-by-day tools to apply in their lives and share further with friends, family, community etc.

Activities can be categorized into three:

- 1) Environmental management – by regularly auditing the key areas of the hostels as well as find new ways to monitor the various processes the volunteer actively engaged in the hostel operations. Review regularly the Sustainability Action Plan in collaboration with the Hostel's staff and set up daily actions that can help achieving the goals for the Swan Eco Label report at the end of the year. This involves also sharing of findings, problem solving, participating in staff meetings and observing progress.
- 2) Environmental education / Education for sustainability – Engaging in training processes for greening the HI Hostels, inspiring and encouraging our staff, our guests and locals alike to contribute to the sustainability work at the HI Hostels and finding ways to share and educate those in interaction. Thus, actively promote sustainability related educational activities and cross cultural experiences of guests, staff members, at the Hostels in Reykjavík, but also to local population.
- 3) Events – Bringing to guests, staff and interested individuals alike, activities and events related to environment, nature protection, responsible tourism, culture values and sustainable development. Apart from raising awareness, sharing of knowledge and teaching of easy-to-put-in-practice skills on

particular issues, stimulate the inter- and cross-cultural side of the life in the hostel. Organizing workshops, green screening (movie nights), promotional events (e.g. EarthHour) and other events (e.g. clothes swapping) to bring attention to opportunities for everyone to green up their daily lives. These events are open to public and create an open space for creativity, art and sharing.

**The basic aim of the project Green Hostels is to raise awareness about sustainability issues, within the local community, the International guests of the HI Iceland, as well as the in-house team.**

The project is divided into five main parts:

- a) On arrival training  
During the first weeks of the volunteers stay in Iceland he/she will have several introduction and training meetings as well as on-site training by the various Reykjavík HI Hostels. The volunteer will learn about the EVS project, Iceland and the Icelandic culture as well as the operations of HI Iceland.
- b) Working towards practical sustainability at one of the Reykjavík HI Hostels.  
This is the main part of the project and is more or less carried out throughout the whole timeline of the project:
  - Maintaining the sustainable policy by regularly auditing the key areas in the Reykjavik Hostels and looking for new ways to make the HI Hostels more sustainable.
  - Review regularly the Sustainability Action Plan in collaboration with the staff and set up daily actions that can help achieving the goals for the Swan Eco Label report at the end of the year.
  - Informing and organizing educational activities on topics of importance as recycling, efficient use of energy and its conservation, biological/organic agriculture, the importance of nutritional equilibrium to health, fair and social responsible trade and travelling/tourism.
  - Bringing to guests, staff and interested individuals alike, activities and events related to environment, nature protection, responsible tourism, culture values and sustainable development. Apart from raising awareness, sharing of knowledge and teaching of easy-to-put-in-practice skills on particular issues, stimulate the inter- and cross-cultural side of the life in the hostel. Tasks like giving aid and advice, making information available, easy to find and understand tools etc.
  - These tasks also include the Reykjavík Campsite, the Borgartún HI Hostels and the Slyppugil Campsite, but on irregular basis, as well as environmental management of events held by HI Iceland.
- c) Developing a more sustainable environment in the franchised hostels (*Flexible, not always part of the project*).  
Some years it is possible for the volunteers to visit other HI Hostels in Iceland during their annual audit together with the HI Iceland's Quality and Sustainability Manager. During these visits the volunteer will have the opportunity to participate in quality and environmental audit

of the hostel as well as work on ideas on how to improve the sustainability work of the franchised hostels.

d) Preparation of the Nordic Swan Ecolabel annual report.

All three Reykjavík HI hostels hold the Swan Nordic Ecolabel certification. Reports on their performance are published annually. Throughout the year the volunteers gather data for the Swan report and in January these documents are prepared in order to report the outcome of the environmental management of each hostel.

e) Evaluation and planning stage for the upcoming volunteers

In the final period of the voluntary service, the volunteer will have the time to evaluate her/his whole experience and the results of the work. At the end of her/his stay in Iceland, she/he shall prepare a set of recommendations and/or suggestions to continue with the tasks by a new volunteer, as well as train them. Advice and guidance concerning the stages and possible sources of information, contacts and gathered data should be offered in order to smooth the transfer of responsibilities.

During all these stages, there will be specific tasks always on going like eg. the weekly suggestions for guests, weekly and monthly meetings, and ensure daily that the sustainability is respected in the locations. Also, the volunteers will have enough time to develop and implement their own ideas and projects.



## Practicalities

### a) Housing

The volunteers will be living in Reykjavík, the capital of Iceland. The volunteer will be lodged in a house shared by the volunteers and trainees working at the Reykjavik Hostels. The volunteers will share the room with max 1 person during the high season, but for app. 6 months, the volunteer could have his/her own room. They will sleep in a single bed with a comfortable mattress, and will share the facilities (kitchen, bathroom, laundry etc) with the other volunteers and trainees living in the house.

### b) Transport

The volunteer will be given a bus card for the public transport within Reykjavík as well as she/he will have the opportunity to use bicycle as a mean of transport. The accommodation is located 10-15 min by bus from the city centre.

### c) Work place

The work of the volunteer will mainly be based in on of the three Reykjavík HI Hostels. All are close to the city centre and with good acces by bus and bike. Occasionally the volunteer will work in a different location depending on the tasks at each time.

### d) Catering

Half board during working days (breakfasts and lunches) will be provided/prepared by/at the Reykjavík HI Hostel, while dinner will be prepared by the volunteers themselves in the apartment, provided by an extra monthly allowance from HI Iceland. Close to the apartment is a supermarket, a bus station, a swimming pool and the sea is just 2-3 min walking distance away.

### e) Intercultural learning

The volunteer will be living in a very international environment, both at work and in the apartment; therefore we strongly believe that the significant Intercultural-learning side of the project will be one of the greatest benefits for the volunteers. During free time, on irregularly basis and free of cost, volunteers will have the possibility to join excursion tours and travel for shorter and longer excursions out of the city to explore the country.

### f) Working hours

Volunteers will work 5 days a week around 35 h (not including lunchtime), usually Mon-Fri, and will have 2 days off per week. The schedule of activities will be decided jointly once the volunteer arrives during the first stage. Holidays are foreseen as 2 days/month. Working hours are flexible as some activities will take place out of regular working hours, in evenings or weekends. Also, there can be days which require more working hours but they will be compensated with shorter working hours in other days.



## Learning opportunities and Youth Pass

Based on the learning opportunities described above, during this project, the volunteer will develop strong skills in the following fields:

- Communication in foreign languages as the daily language used will be mainly English.
- Communication in the mother tongue might not always be applicable but as mentioned above the volunteer will be living and working in an international environment where many languages are spoken.
- Learning to learn as the volunteers will have the chance to organize and develop their own learning and will always look for ways to promote sustainability aspects in interesting ways.
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship as the volunteers will have the chance to materialize their dreams and implement their ideas in an engaging and motivated environment.
- Cultural awareness and expression by living in an international environment and also by learning to integrate step by step in the Icelandic society.
- Social and civic competence will be highly developed through workshops, educational activities and daily engagement with staff members and partners
- Digital competence by compiling and gathering information into leaflets, posters and all kinds of educational materials. During the project, part of the communication will be conducted online, through emails and written materials on the social media like facebook etc.
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology will be mainly developed during the preparation of Swan Nordic Ecolabel annual report in collaboration with the staff members of HI Iceland.

## Profile of volunteer and recruitment process

We would like volunteers applying for this project to have a strong motivation and dedication for working inside an international group on mostly environmental and responsible tourism educational and practical activities. Volunteer's enthusiasm, creativity and interest in order to engage with people, to work in team but also willingness to accept personal responsibilities are highly appreciated. A readiness to work with flexibility in changing or developing situations is essential, as well as an ability to occasionally work in high-pressure situations.

Particular interest in environmental issues, in sustainability, culture and responsible travelling will be very useful when developing the activities and training staff members. English language skills are of a big advantage, while Icelandic is not a requirement. Artistic skills or digital competences are also highly appreciated but not mandatory.

Volunteers have to be between 18 and 30 years old. Gender is of no importance. Ethnic groups, religion, sexual orientation or political opinions are not taken into account. There are no special, specific qualifications or practical skills needed, as training will be given and constant support offered – the volunteer must be though able to follow up with his/her aims and motivation to learn and develop.

Candidates will be asked to send us their application via on line portal <http://www.hostel.is/Joinus/>

The following documents are needed to complete the application form:

- CV – Attached to the application form (.pdf document)
- Motivation letter – Attached to the application form (.pdf document)
- Video CV – Upload a short video of you