

## Nr.4- Red Cross shelters

<b>Theme</b>	People with mental illness
<b>Project duration</b>	6 or 12 months
<b>Total volunteers</b>	3 volunteers, each in different shelter
<b>Location</b>	Reykjavík, Kópavogur, Akureyri

### Target group

- The volunteer must be interested in working with people with mental illness.
- The volunteer must be responsible and motivated to work.
- The volunteer should be ready to learn Icelandic.
- The volunteer should have ability to adjust to the prevailing situations at the project site.
- The volunteer should be aware of long, cold and dark winter days and nights in Iceland, and also of the bright summer nights when the sun hardly sets down.
- The volunteer should be open-minded, flexible, enthusiastic, independent, responsible and be interested in working with people.

### Project environment

The Red Cross in Iceland runs 4 shelters for the mentally ill. Those are Vin in Reykjavík, Dvöl in Kópavogur, Lækur in Hafnarfjörður and Laut in Akureyri. The volunteer will work in the three shelters of Vin, Dvöl and Laut.

The aim of the day centers is to socially integrate, otherwise isolated, mentally ill people, to help them to change their routines and add something extra to their lives. The aim is also to improve their quality of life, and strengthen physiological, physical and sociological well-being of the guests. Furthermore, the aim is to help the guests to increase their skills in participation in daily activities.

The volunteer's tasks will be to assist the staff in the shelters taking care of the mentally ill. He/she will be asked to be the extra staff that otherwise would not be hired, a helping hand and a caring friend. It is important to have in mind that the volunteer will be working with sometimes fragile people, people who suffer from a mental illness but do not need to be hospitalized.

It is very good to have volunteers from different countries and different cultures, with whom the guests can talk to, exchange experiences and ideas with, and to break the general monotony. This project also gives the volunteer the opportunity to work with less fortunate people.

#### **About the location of the 4 shelters**

##### **VIN.**

Is located in a big and beautiful old house in the centre of Reykjavik, parallel to the main street of the capital. The living conditions of young people are rather good. Education in Iceland is on par with leading nations in Europe and at any given moment around 7,000 Icelandic students are studying all over the world, so in general the intercultural experience of the population is high. The language is Icelandic, but English is the foreign language that most Icelanders are able to speak. The cultural scene in Iceland is blossoming in many areas such as music, literature, theatre. The city bus system, Strætó, is the cheapest public means of transportation. Bicycle paths are spread all over the city, making it easy and quick to reach all destinations by bike for those who are prepared to bike up and down hills in all sorts of weather; wind, rain, snow and sometimes sun.

## **DVÖL.**

Kópavogsdeild Rauða Kross Íslands is one of the local branches of the Red Cross in Iceland. Kópavogur is Iceland's second largest town, with a population of about 50,000. It lies immediately south of Reykjavík and is part of the Greater Reykjavík Area. It is largely made up of residential areas, but has a lot of commercial and industrial activity as well. The name literally means Baby Seal Bay.

## **LAUT.**

Laut is run by the Red Cross in Akureyri and is in a small house with a very friendly environment with trees and a little garden. Akureyri is the centre of culture, education and leisure activities in North Iceland. With a population of about 20,000, the town is by far the largest outside the Reykjavík capital area. Akureyri is situated in north-east Iceland, in one of the longest fjords in the country and is surrounded by mountains reaching 1000-1500 m. The Arctic Circle is only 60 km north of Akureyri but still the climate is mild, with summer temperatures up to 25°C and winter temperatures in average around 0°C. The town is a good base for many of Iceland's most beautiful natural wonders as waterfalls, volcanic areas and canyons as well as exciting activities as river rafting, hiking, fishing, whale watching and horse riding.

## **Tasks**

### **About the tasks of the 4 shelters**

#### **VIN**

The aim is to give the people that come to Vin the possibility to have something interesting to do during the day, like playing chess, playing bocchia, doing gymnastics or dancing (sometimes), listening to music, painting, writing or watching movies when they want. Concerning practical facilities, the mentally ill can have something to eat in the morning, and there is a main meal at lunch time for those who want to join. They can also use the shower, the washing machine, and rest a bit in a room with a few mattresses. Some of the clients stay a long time during the day, others just for a while, others for the main meal, and others for specific activities. Most of the clients are autonomous but in case they are not, they can ask for any help they need. VIN is meant for those who have been hospitalised in the past but who don't need further special care (there is no medical care at VIN project).

In a general meaning, the volunteer's tasks will be to assist the staff at VIN (4 workers), taking care of the mentally ill clients the needs of the house. The volunteer will participate in different activities, like conversing with the guests and spending quality time with them, cooking (about two hours preparation), organizing and participating in the activities of the day, cleaning the house, etc. The volunteer will also be asked to join the staff in some extra activities, like going for a walk or visit a museum (sometimes, not regular). In this project the volunteer's ideas, skills, and initiatives will be welcomed. Every worker and the volunteer will participate in everything. There aren't specific tasks for each workers and all of them work together in a friendly atmosphere.

Working hours at VIN are between 9:00 and 16:00 Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, between 11:00 and 18:00 on Wednesdays during the winter and between 9:00 and 16:00 during the summer. On Fridays, working hours are between 10:00 and 16:00. VIN provides breakfast and lunch for the volunteer.

Once a month, the volunteer will receive a guidance session.

Once a week, the volunteer will cook lunch together with one of the clients for about 18 people. The task of the volunteer includes encouraging the clients to participate actively. Tasks include:

- What to cook
- What do buy
- Prepare food
- Tidy up in the kitchen and the dining room

General tasks in the shelter:

- To be around / active participation
- To provide social support to the guests
- Assist in general chores where needed, according to instructions by the staff
- Take initiative
- Be open and positive and feel free to come up with suggestions

All days:

- Prepare coffee
- Empty the dish washer
- Check what has to go into the laundry (table cloths, towels, etc)
- Time together with the clients between 11:00 and 12:00
- Tidying up at the end of the day and preparing the next day
- General tasks in the shelter as necessary, instructed by the staff
- The volunteer can have internet access for his/her personal use for about one hour per day at the shelter

Mondays:

- Time together with the clients between 11:00 and 12:00
- Doing the laundry
- Feeding the birds
- House meeting
- Emptying/filling the dish washer

Tuesdays:

- Helping to tidy up
- Time together with the clients between 11:00 and 12:00
- Participating or leading the exercise session
- Arts session (participating or leading the session)
- Emptying/filling the dish washer

Wednesdays:

- Taking short walks or visiting art exhibition with clients if they are interested in doing so
- Time together with the clients between 11:00 and 12:00
- Emptying/filling the dish washer

Thursdays:

- Feeding the birds
- Time together with the clients between 11:00 and 12:00
- Emptying/filling the dish washer
- Preparing a fruit basket after lunch
- Emptying/filling the dish washer

Fridays:

- General chores in the shelter
- Time together with the clients between 11:00 and 12:00
- Emptying/filling the dish washer

## DVÖL

DVÖL is a project based on a Scandinavian model and has been open for about 10 years. Mentally ill people meet at DVÖL during the day and spend their leisure time. They have the chance to sit down with their favorite hobbies; paint or write or go for walks or to coffee shops together. All the staff in Dvöl are equal and share all responsibility accordingly.

The tasks vary from one week to the next even if some routines are the same every week as certain things need to be taken care of every day. The week starts with outdoor activities with the clients after breakfast. They go for walks in the neighborhood or visit coffee shops. The volunteer will be asked to join the staff in these walks with the guests of Dvöl. The guests in Dvöl can come and wash and iron their clothes. The volunteers experience in cooking will be valued and he/she can bring fresh new ideas from his/her home country into the home. There is an art workshop in Dvöl; the guests paint and do all kinds of art and here as well the volunteer's new ideas will be valued. Different galleries and museums are visited regularly. On Thursdays and Fridays the guests in Dvöl get visitors such as priests or artists to come and talk. This has to be planned beforehand and the volunteer will be asked to assist here. It will depend greatly on the interest of the volunteer where and how he/she will spend his/her day in Dvöl and this will be evaluated with the staff regularly.

The volunteer will work from 10:00 to 16:00.

A standard week / schedule at Dvöl looks like this:

- Cook once a week (Thursdays)
- Clean up after lunch three times a week, with the assistance of guests
- Monday mornings between 10:15 and 11:30: Invited guests to paint / do crafts in the art room
- Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday mornings 10:30 - 11:30: Invite guests to go for walks
- Offer to take the guest/s to a coffee shop once a week
- Participate in daily activities with guests after lunch (e.g. watching videos / doing handicrafts).
- Preparing fruit and coffee at 14:00 daily.
- Assisting staff to clean up and put things away before closing.
- NB: Volunteers can use the computer for half an hour each day.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10:00	Painting / Craft work	Walking with guests	Walking with guests	Cooking with guests	Walking with guests
12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30	Clean up	Clean up	Clean up	Clean up	Clean up
13:00	Watch videos	Playing games/ handicrafts	Coffee Shop	Playing games/ handicrafts	Playing games/ handicrafts
14:00	Preparing fruit / coffee	Preparing fruit and coffee	Preparing fruit and coffee	Preparing fruit and coffee	Preparing fruit and coffee

## LAUT

Laut is a development project based on a Scandinavian model. The target group can meet there during the day and spend their leisure time. They have the chance to sit down with their favourite hobbies, paint or write or go for walks or to coffee shops together. All the staff in LAUT are equal and share all responsibility accordingly. The work varies from one week to the next even if some routines are the same every week as certain things need to be taken care of every day. Tuesdays are washing days; the guests in LAUT can come and wash and iron their clothes. That day they also share their experience in cooking. The volunteer's experience in cooking will be valued and he/she can bring fresh new ideas from his/her home country into the shelter.

There may be themes during different months, such as "well-being," whereby those things are particularly emphasised and promoted (for example through eating healthy, going for short walks, engaging in self-care activities). The volunteer will engage with the guests in activities such as: Going for walks in the neighbourhood; visiting coffee shops; bowling; playing chess; preparing for festivals; baking workshops; candle workshops and cooking. The guests paint and do all kinds of art and here the volunteer's ideas will be welcomed.

A standard week / schedule at Laut might look something like this:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:30 - 12:00	Reading papers / Talking / Going for walks / Going to coffee Shop	Reading papers / Talking / Going for walks / Going to coffee Shop	Reading papers / Talking / Going for walks / Going to coffee Shop	Reading papers / Talking / Going for walks / Going to coffee Shop	Reading papers / Talking / Going for walks / Going to coffee Shop
12:00 - 13:00	Cooking / Lunch / Tidying Up	Cooking / Lunch / Tidying Up	Cooking / Lunch / Tidying Up	Cooking / Lunch / Tidying Up	Cooking / Lunch / Tidying Up
14:00 - 15:45	Games Club (e.g. chess, bowling, handicraft; movies)	Games Club (e.g. chess, bowling, handicraft; movies) / House Meeting	Games Club (e.g. chess, bowling, handicraft; movies)	Games Club (e.g. chess, bowling, handicraft; movies)	Games Club (e.g. chess, bowling, handicraft; movies)
15:45	Tidying Up / Finishing activities	Tidying Up / Finishing activities	Tidying Up / Finishing activities	Tidying Up / Finishing activities	Tidying Up / Finishing activities

### **Practical Arrangements:**

Breaks will be given during Christmas, Easter and other holidays in accordance with Icelandic laws and customs. For each month of work, there are 2 days of holiday, so for 6 months voluntary exchange there are 12 days of holiday and for 12 months exchange there are 24 days of holiday. When the volunteer takes his holidays, it is an agreement between the volunteer and the project. We suggest a trip around Iceland to explore the astonishing nature.

The volunteers can expect that during their voluntary stay, they may spend some time in each shelter although they will spend most of the time in one shelter. When applying for a voluntary exchange at the red cross shelters, you NEED to identify the shelter you prefer to spend most of your time. You will never move between shelters unless you have been informed in due time. It is not always possible to work in other shelters or move between them upon request.

The volunteer will live in a flat with other AUS volunteers, and possibly share a room with another volunteer. It's also possible that the volunteer will live with a Icelandic host family. The volunteer will have breakfast and lunch in the project, and get in addition to that food money for the meals he does not get in the project. The volunteer will get the equivalent of 145€ in Icelandic kronas for pocket money, every month. (NB: The pocket money will be paid in Icelandic Kronas according to the exchange rate that was valid the date the EVS grant was received. AUS cannot be held responsible for exchange rate fluctuations. Should the volunteer prefer to be paid in Euro, he/she will need to advise the organisation immediately). AUS will provide a bus card to the volunteer.

### **Training and support of volunteers**

The volunteer is obliged to attend on-arrival training and mid-term evaluation in Iceland, and also pre-departure and end-of-term evaluation meetings in the sending country.

During the orientation and In-service period:

- at the onset, the volunteer will be informed of code of conduct in the host country, particularly with regard to cultural differences and gender roles. Emphasis will also be placed on issues related to personal safety (e.g. DOs and DON'Ts; how to keep safe and avoid possible risks in their daily life and work environment).
- a session on health risk and how to respond to different issues and where to go
- a session on rights and responsibilities of EVS volunteers and hosts

The volunteer will receive up to 35 hours of language training on arrival in Iceland. On-going support and training will be provided by the staff and co-workers of AUS-ICYE Iceland, daily training by the staff of the on field-project and a personal support is given by the volunteer's mentor.

AUS provides each volunteer a mentor who match more or less with the interests of the volunteer The mentor will meet regularly with the volunteer to check on their progress and help solve any problems. To begin with 2-4 times over the first 3 months, after that once every 1-2 months. They will also ensure ongoing support for the volunteer. The volunteer will be given any training necessary for them to carry out their tasks.

Within the project there will be another mentor for the volunteer besides the AUS-mentor, that will be the person that for most of the time is the person the volunteer talks to if needed, and also about the tasks and changes in the project.

## **Intercultural dimension**

Being a volunteer in Iceland and doing voluntary service will almost surely broaden the horizons of the volunteer. At our camps/trainings we have the homecoming Icelandic volunteers mixed with the group of foreign volunteers in Iceland, and as we are a part of a global network we have volunteers and returnees from all the different part of the world and therefore different cultures. To mix the groups has proved to be very beneficial for the organisation, the homecoming- and foreign volunteers.

As we host a rather large amount of Volunteers each year, the group can easily make a visible impact on the local community. The volunteers are encouraged to write about their experience in newsletters, daily newspapers, take part in exhibitions in local youth clubs. We plan to do promotions during our camps in the local community which hosts us at each time. The volunteers share their experience with other youth in order to campaigning both for the programme and the idea of volunteering. We encourage volunteers to visit each others and learn about the projects the other volunteers are participating in, and also to do futher volunteer work if they are interested.