

The Worldhouse

The worldhouse is a community center for information, counseling, education and cultural activities for undocumented migrants. The worldhouse is one of the projects developed by the Protestantse Diaconie Amsterdam. We offer an EVS-program for 12 months in the Worldhouse, starting 1 September 2018 and finishing 31 August 2019.

Approximately 15.000 undocumented people live in Amsterdam; all of them have their own story. Some of them are refugees or rejected asylumseekers. Others came as labour migrants, often working as domestic workers. Some are victims of human trafficking or a failed marriage migration.

The Wereldhuis is the place where migrants are not dependent on others for a while. They can come here for advice and counseling. They can become active and emancipate. Most of the activities in the Wereldhuis are developed by undocumented migrants themselves. We host grassroots organizations for undocumented migrant workers. An intense and strong social network makes the people of the Wereldhuis more powerful. Actively volunteering gives them better perspectives as well.

About the Worldhouse: what do we do?

Help in crisis situations

If you have problems and you would like to have a confidential conversation with a pastor or a social worker you can make an appointment with them. Once a week there is a lawyer at the Worldhouse who gives free legal advice. The medical organization 'Dokters van de Wereld' provides information about access to healthcare every Friday morning.

The Worldhouse speaks out

Migration is of all times. Migrants in Amsterdam are part of global processes. The Worldhouse doesn't judge the motivation with which a migrant has traveled to this place. The Worldhouse takes part in the debate around irregular migration and raises the voices of people who are oppressed. Therefore, we organize yearly conferences in order to show in the publications and research the situation of our network partners and, of course, to help undocumented migrants to raise their voices.

Education and activities related to Human Rights and Empowerment:

People without papers have some basic rights in The Netherlands, for example access to health care, a right to legal help, education for children and protection from human trafficking. It is important to know these rights very well. The Worldhouse offers continuous information about all the issues related to the basic rights of the people

During opening hours, you can participate in all the activities and projects

On weekdays all the people can eat for free, giving their help to the Wereldhuis in return, for example with the maintenance and cleaning of the house and servicing of the food. The Worldhouse also provides second-hand clothes, books and toys with a maximum of three pieces per person. During the week, there are language courses (English, Spanish and Dutch) computer classes and recreative activities like yoga, drawing and kickboxing.

Every Tuesday there is yoga for women and for men, this can help you to release the stress in your body and to make your body more flexible.

On Wednesday, from 18:00 we have a project called “Faces of the World” which is meant to watch documentaries and tv-fragments together and create discussion on topics that concern the entire world. At the end, a dinner is organized for all the participants.

On Wednesday morning the Worldhouse offers a project called “No paper work” that aims to train each participant in basic knowledge of work related issues.

Empowerment

Currently, The Worldhouse is working on how to develop projects which aim to strengthen the personal empowerment of undocumented people. We all have skills; you only have to know how to use them!

Every Friday there is the theater fun class and the Creative Agency where you can play and make beautiful things. In the evening it’s time for the **Worldhouse fusion band**. Come along at 6 p.m. if you like to make music! On that evening we also organize the Friday Movie Night program.

Self-organizations

Many labor migrants try to make their position stronger by joining a self-organized group. Several grass-root organizations meet up at the Worldhouse every week. They organize trainings and parties. For more information check the information in the Worldhouse and on the website.

Being EVS Volunteer – Tasks

As an EVS volunteer you do fulltime voluntary work in the Worldhouse.

We offer the possibility to learn new skills within our diverse team, according to the personal interest and wishes of the volunteer. The volunteer can join staff members working together in many different fields of work, applying diverse skills and knowledge in their daily work. In the Worldhouse the following fields of work come together:

- social work; – activity development and coordination; – logistics; – organization and management;
- advocacy skills in the field of human rights.

Volunteers can participate in many different activities, and can also develop their own activities: you become part of the big Worldhouse family. A crucial aspect is the contact with the migrants, and the many questions and issues they come with.

Examples of activities the volunteer can undertake:

- 1)** be a host for Worldhouse visitors: welcoming (new) visitors, having a chat with them, listening to their needs and wishes, reporting to the coordinators
- 2)** doing “intake-conversations” with new clients and referring them to the right person
- 3)** supporting the “Worldhouse college” activities. The Worldhouse offers a wide range of activities to our visitors. These range from language classes, to music classes, cooking groups, discussion groups, creative courses class etc. The EVS volunteer can either organize a new activity (like art class)

– in response to requests from the visitors – help out with an existing activities or help organizing daily affairs (supporting the activity-coordinator with her coordinating work)

4) assisting language and computer courses, sport activities (volleyball e.o.) and indoor games during open house afternoons

5) Organizing the logistics: making (cooking) schedules, organizing events, facilities etc.

As mentioned before, central to the Worldhouse's way of working, is our "empowerment" approach. Our daily work is to support people to develop themselves, with their own power and possibilities as the starting point. After the initial introduction to the Worldhouse, a volunteer can indicate what his/her interests and talents are or what he/she would like to learn. Based on this knowledge, we can discuss together what can be possible fields of volunteering.

The Worldhouse is an intense place to work: it can be chaotic, you can encounter unexpected situations and will meet many people in a very vulnerable position, that you might not always be able to help.

European Voluntary Service – Arrangements and Accommodation

We ask that volunteers are aged between 18-30 and enrolled in the European Voluntary Service Program. For this you need a sending organization in your home country. If you do not have a sending organization, we can help you find one!

In the first few weeks of the program, the two EVS volunteers in the Worldhouse follow a special introductory program, which includes teambuilding activities and trainings. The Worldhouse EVS program is part of the Amsterdam Voluntary Year, which also includes the EVS project Mission House, with 8 EVS volunteers. Together you will have the introduction program, language lessons and trainings.

Through the European Voluntary Service program from the European Union the volunteer will receive pocketmoney of €120,- a month. Together with the other volunteers you will receive money for food, and all volunteers will receive a bike and an ov-card for public transport that they can use during these 12 months.

You will receive a personal foodbudget (around €200,-) and will have your own small apartment, located in central Amsterdam. The other EVS-volunteer will live nextdoor in a similar apartment.

You will work approximately 32-36 hours per week. You will have 20 free days and the national holidays off as well.

The 'Protestantse Diaconie Amsterdam' that organizes the Amsterdam Voluntary Year has an extensive support structure with professional supervisors at each of the projects, a project leader and mentors. The volunteer has regular evaluation meetings with them.

Criteria and Application Procedure

Are you?

- Motivated to work with (undocumented) migrants?
- Interested in learning from other cultures?
- Interested in working in a multicultural setting ?
- Able to deal with stress, flexible and cooperative?
- Creative and willing to take own initiative in your work setting?
- Experienced/able to deal with people in a vulnerable situation?
- Available for this EVS program for 12 months, between 01 September 2018 and 31 August 2019?

Then we hope you will apply for this EVS-job!

You can apply by filling out the application form that you can find on our website:

www.wereldhuis.org/EVS

Email your application before the 5th of February to Geeske Hovingh at: g.hovingh@diaconie.org

(In Februari/ March we will organize skype interviews and make our selection.)

More Information?

You can find more information at: www.wereldhuis.org and about our organization at www.diaconie.org. You can always email Geeske Hovingh (Projectleader) with questions or remarks at g.hovingh@diaconie.org