

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Water for Life project about?

Water for Life is a three-year long clean-water project initiated and managed by the Singapore International Foundation. The project aims to bring clean drinking water to villagers. For a more holistic approach, Water for Life also looks into providing basic hygiene programmes for the communities. Water for Life holds a special significance for the SIF, which has always been engaged in capacity-building projects, where skilled Singapore volunteers are sent overseas to share their expertise with their local counterparts. Water for Life is the foundation's first direct-service project, defined as one which channels resources directly to a community to meet vital needs in a sustainable way.

What is Words on Wheels project about?

Words on Wheels (WOW) is a mobile library project initiated and managed by the Singapore International Foundation. By providing students and local communities in Ho Chi Minh City access to free education materials, IT resources and learning facilities, the project aims to inculcate reading and self-learning habits among the participating schools and cultural centres to encourage lifelong learning. Volunteers will develop and conduct English lessons to help improve the students' language skills and provide coaching on using Internet and multimedia information tools to enhance the technological skills of the students.

What are the prerequisites to be part of Direct Service Projects volunteer group?

We require a minimum group of 6 – 10 (for WFL) and 4 – 8 (for WOW) members for each volunteer trip. The volunteers must be:

- At least 18 years old and above
- Medically fit for overseas travel
- Adaptable and willing to serve, motivated to change
- Demonstrate cultural sensitivity
- Open to sharing and learning
- A team player with good interpersonal skills

I am unable to form a group. Can the SIF help to find or link me up with other like-minded volunteers?

We will facilitate matching of individuals to form a group based on the dates we scheduled and will inform you once we have enough people to form the group.

I am a foreigner/PR living in Singapore. Can I volunteer in Direct Service Projects?

Yes, we welcome volunteers who are residing in Singapore. Volunteers have to be Singapore citizens, PR or foreigners holding a work or study visa who are residing in Singapore.

What are the costs involved for volunteers?

Costs may vary from project to project, depending on the location. The volunteer costing payment is to cover the following costs for the volunteer programme:

- Pre-trip assistance
- Airfare
- Hotel accommodation for either single room or twin-sharing room
- Travel insurance and emergency evacuation service
- Ground transport including airport transfers
- Lunch
- Local logistics and on-site assistance

Does the SIF provide any funding for such volunteer groups?

All volunteers are required to finance their own volunteer trips. This is because the Direct Service Projects platform focuses on channelling resources to disadvantaged communities and directly addressing their immediate concerns. By having volunteers to take care of their own costs, we are then able to focus resources on the communities.

You may choose to raise funds publicly or privately among friends and family. Please check with the Commissioner of Charities and the Singapore Police Force for the regulations pertaining to public fund-raising as well as application for fund-raising permits.

Can we extend the volunteer trip?

Yes, please let us know if you wish to extend your stay before making your payment as the cost will increase accordingly to the duration of your stay. Once payment has been made, you will not be able to make any changes to your trip.

What is the SIF's role in organising the volunteering trip?

The SIF will make all the necessary arrangements for you for the trip. We will also conduct a pre-departure briefing and relevant training to equip and better prepare volunteers for the volunteer trip. An SIF staff or a team-leader will also provide on-site assistance during the volunteer trip.

A team co-ordinator will be appointed for every volunteer group to liaise with an SIF staff to coordinate the volunteer trip. The team co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring the required forms are duly completed and submitted, as well as coordinating the travel plans and arranging logistics for team. An SIF staff will be available throughout for consultation.

How do I register and apply for the volunteer trip?

You will have to sign up as a member to register your interest here.

Are the volunteering trips dangerous?

There are inherent risks associated with overseas volunteering. The SIF will advise all volunteers what the travel insurance covers and the necessary precautions in terms of personal medical needs and safety. While the SIF will take the necessary precautions to provide a safe working environment, the volunteers will need to take full responsibility of inherent risks when travelling and working at the project site.

Will there be any certificates/acknowledgement for volunteering in Direct Service Projects?

Upon completion of your volunteer trip, SIF will email you an e-Certificate of Participation in September/October and you will become part of the community of Singapore International Volunteers. You will get to enjoy the list of privileges accorded to this community of volunteers.

Are there other direct-service projects that we can volunteer in?

We are continuously seeking projects that will engage Singapore community to participate in the SIF's overseas Direct Service Projects.

If you are interested to find out more, feel free to contact us through our website or sign up for our E-Newsletter to receive regular updates and volunteer opportunities.

I am looking for projects as part of the Youth Expedition Project. Can we volunteer in the SIF's Direct Service Projects with YEP funding?

Our Direct Service Projects are designed for short-term volunteering. Hence, we are unable to support projects under the Youth Expedition Project.

Will I be able to keep in contact with the community after my trip? Can I go independently to visit them after my trip?

All volunteers are free to maintain contact and visit the community.

I would like to donate cash or resources to the project. How can I do it and can this be tax-deductible?

While we welcome donations of funds as well as resources, we will need more information on your donation before assessing if this is viable for the overseas community, and if it can be tax-deductible.

Please contact us at siv@sif.org.sg for further discussion.
