

Coordinating organisation

As we already mentioned there are many different roles in EVS project. We need sending organisation that is responsible for preparation of the volunteer before sending him/her to the project and receiving organisation that works with volunteer within his/her service in the foreign country and support him/her. But let's speak about coordinating organisation as an important part of EVS projects.

Generally, we can say that coordinating organisation is the organisation responsible for submitting the application and administrating the entire projects. It means the organisation that is writing the application, budgeting all the project and writing the final report at the end of the project. Very often we can meet the situation that coordinating organisation is at the same time receiving organisation or sending organisation. For the project it means that there is always somebody who must be an applicant, it doesn't matter how many partners are involved. But sometimes it can happen that there are also receiving organisations in EVS project that are not well experienced or that are afraid of administrative burden connected with the project. In this field coordinating organisation can be very helpful for all the EVS process. Coordinating organisation doesn't need to be always sending or receiving, it can be just the organisation that solves all the things connected with the project and it is also an applicant. It means that coordinating organisation must have enough experience with EVS project to be able to support other partners and help them reach great impact.

Let's look how can a coordinating organisation be useful during all phases of EVS project:

Preparation

The first step is always accreditation. It means filling up Application Form for Accreditation where the organisation describes details about mission and objectives, activities, experience, staff and describes also all details about the future EVS project. Especially for receiving organisation it means that all practical arrangements including weekly timetable, accommodation, food, support and monitoring must be already known. It is necessary for receiving organisation to set up all details together with coordinating organisation – how the project is going to be administrated and funded and how the responsibilities will be divided. Coordinating organisation can also help with solving the accommodation or setting up the system of monitoring and learning process of the volunteer. As soon as the Application Form for Accreditation is ready and the accreditors come for a visit, representatives of receiving organisation as well as a representative of coordinating organisation should be present to answer all unclear issues in the application form.

When receiving organisation gains the accreditation number, coordinating organisation can start to prepare a project for concrete EVS volunteers. About the choice of possible volunteers, it depends on arrangements between receiving and coordinating organisation. Usually coordinating organisation makes a first choice of possible volunteers and send them to receiving organisation for a final decision or receiving organisation makes a choice of possible volunteers on its own. Coordinating organisation is then in touch with sending organisations and communicate about all issues that are necessary for accepting the volunteer in the project.

As soon as the project is approved coordinating organisation starts to communicate with sending and receiving organisation and prepare everything needed to start the project. Coordinating organisation can also help with insurance of the volunteer or visa if needed.

During EVS

During EVS coordinating organisation is looking after distribution of the grant between sending and receiving organisation and solving all administrative issues. The coordinating organisation also ensures that volunteer will attend all necessary training. Very often coordinating organisation arranges meetings with the coordinator of receiving organisation and speak about all the process of EVS and also meetings with a volunteer to speak about their service and about possible troubles. Coordinating organisation should also provide the support in case of any unexpected situation that may appear. Coordinating organisation can also help with the learning process and is responsible for the work with Youthpass certificate. It always depends on specific offer what you can use from your coordinating organisation's experience. It is necessary to set up the ways of communication between all partners. The coordinating organisation also shouldn't forget to inform sending organisation about the process and about all important events.

After EVS

When the volunteer's service is over, coordinating organisation starts preparing the final report together with sending and receiving organisation. Before that, it is also necessary to make an evaluation of the process at the end with the volunteer and also with sending and receiving organisation. This evaluation should be focused not only on the impact and results of the project and on learning process but also on mutual cooperation. It is necessary to speak about things that don't work well and look for the solution for future projects. Coordinating organisation then works with Mobility tool, ensures the final reports from volunteers, and sends the final report to the National Agency.

Few recommendation if you decide to become a partner of the project with coordinating organisation:

- 1. Get to know your coordinating organisation well** – you will cooperate in the project that can last more than a year. Ask the representatives about their experience with projects and also with European volunteer service. Make sure they want to help you in the process and they will have enough time to do it.
- 2 Set up your mutual cooperation** – speak about ways of communication, about your responsibilities, set up regular meetings between you and a representative of coordinating organisation. If you use your time before the project to do it, it will make your cooperation easier during the projects. Don't forget to speak about how the grant is being transferred, divided between coordinating, receiving and sending organisation and what kind of documents will your coordinating organisation need.
- 3. Try to use the experience of your coordinating organisation as much as possible** – in case that you don't have enough experience, use the experience of your coordinating organisation. If your coordinating organisation is well experienced, it can have some useful solutions that will make your life with volunteer easier. It is useless to look for solutions that have already been discovered before.
- 4. Ask your coordinating organisation for help** – if you have any troubles with accreditation, in preparation or during the volunteer's stay in your organisation, ask for help if needed. Your coordinating organisation should be prepared to look together with you for solutions that are useful for you as well as for the volunteer.

Romana Michaela Michalíková,

Trendum, o.p.s., long-term experience with topic of EVS

and with EVS accreditations, Czech Republic