



SOCIAL SERVICE ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEERS WITHOUT BORDERS (VSF)

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT VSF FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS 2009 EDITION

WHAT IS VSF?

Volunteers Without Borders (VSF) is a non-profit organization that encourages an exchange of volunteers among countries, social service organizations, and businesses with socially responsible projects.

VSF's mission is to strengthen the development of these projects and their organizations, through the international exchange of volunteers, employers and employees, promoting interconnectedness, an exchange of experience, and learning.

VSF promotes the human values of solidarity, respect, diversity, tolerance, cooperation, volunteerism, networking and cultural diversity.

WHAT IS VSF'S VISION?

To be intermediaries of international exchange among social service organizations, businesses, universities or governments, promoting volunteerism, dialogue, cultural diversity, and solidarity.

To be able to create an international network of volunteers, integrating into it organizations which are already developing social service projects in at least 15 countries around the world.

To achieve a high level of organizational development, to spread VSF's ideals, and to encourage action that promotes the exchange of volunteers and their organizations in all of their forms.

WHAT ARE VSF'S FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES?

Nº	PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION
1	A CONSTANTLY EVOLVING, JOINT PROJECT	<p>VSF is a joint project that is constantly evolving. This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the one hand, <i>esprit de corps</i> should be predominant, i.e., VSF is not subservient to any one of its members. Rather, that all members are to share common objectives that advance the whole without individual ego or thirst for glory. • On the other hand, VSF objectives and activities are constantly being reworked, in order to improve their quantity and quality, and because acts of solidarity should respond to the current needs of the communities and organizations that are being served.
2	POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE	<p>VSF is nonpartisan. It should be noted that all volunteers are free to participate in any political party they choose, as long as they do not attempt to impose their political beliefs onto others in the program.</p>
3	RELIGIOUS INDEPENDENCE	<p>VSF does not support or adhere to any particular religion. It should be noted that all volunteers are free to profess any religion they choose, as long as they do not attempt to proselytize.</p>
4	OPENNESS	<p>VSF is open to all people and organizations with a spirit of solidarity, regardless of their origins or beliefs, as long as they adhere to the principles and objectives that VSF pursues.</p>
5	CONSTRUCTIVE DEBATE	<p>VSF, in order to improve communal activity, promotes the exchange of ideas and constructive criticism, as long as the basic rules and ideological principles of VSF are respected.</p>
6	CULTURAL EXCHANGE AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION	<p>VSF primarily focuses its efforts on creating experiences of international exchange, because VSF understands that they are powerful tools for social transformation. VSF believes that exchange programs can improve the development of social service projects, the unity of communities, the spread of cultural diversity, and the communities with which they interact.</p>
7	THE ROLL OF VSF AND THE GOVERNMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VSF can not and does not seek to supplant essential government functions. VSF believes not only that the reform of structural problems is an essential obligation of the state, but also that these structural problems can not be solved by social service organizations alone. However, assuming there exists a mature relationship between the government and its people, VSF, by overcoming prejudice and preconceptions, does promote and participate in experiences of collective management. • Nevertheless, the development and growth of social service organizations is of vital importance in providing incentives for and facilitating direct citizen participation in issues of public interest. In this sense, the social service role that VSF can play is transcendental. It promotes community development and exchange experiences. It also collaborates with governmental and non-governmental entities in the design and execution of public policy (eg. participation in public debate, advice, joint projects, decisive action, institutional networks, etc.).
8	EQUAL OPPORTUNITY	<p>One of the fundamental principles that guides the actions of VSF is equal opportunity. This means, that, through its actions, VSF helps the communities, with which it interacts, achieve the same opportunities that any other social group has, especially concerning education.</p>

9	HUMILITY AND WORKING TOGETHER	Social service projects, developed by VSF, should be realized with humility and with the goal of generating a mutually beneficial exchange with the communities with which they work. That is to say, VSF's work consists of giving and receiving from a standpoint of equality. It does not think of itself as the possessor of absolute truth, but rather tries to promote social development in partnership with the communities with which it works.
10	AREAS OF PARTICIPATION AND INTERNAL STRUCTURE	Internally, VSF seeks, in all of its projects, to promote the participation and development of its volunteers, without preference to seniority or position within the organization. For this purpose, there are various areas of participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • field projects, • institutional projects, • institutional areas, • plenaries, • social events, • meetings of reflection and debate pertaining to specific topics. However, concerning <i>institutional, administrative, legal, and accounting</i> issues, as well as <i>planning and strategic</i> issues, there is a formal structure described in the organizational bylaws. Decisions made by the following bodies <i>must be adhered to</i> by all VSF participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directive Commission, • Department of Finance, • Assembly of Associates. Volunteers are those people who participate in VSF. Associates are those who, after six months of participation, decide to assume an associate role, which will allow them in the future to chose and be chosen for positions of authority within VSF.
11	IMPORTANCE OF THE ORGANIZATION'S BYLAWS	The fundamental text which governs the institutional life of VSF is the organization's bylaws, approved October, 2005. All volunteers should know and respect these bylaws.
12	INTERNAL SOLIDARITY AND TEAMWORK	Concerning the internal workings of the institution, two principles should prevail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Solidarity. • Teamwork.
13	DIALOGUE AND CONSENSUS	At VSF, internal confrontations or power disputes will not be tolerated. Conversely, VSF favors dialogue and attempts to define, by consensus, who will assume distinct functions or roles within VSF.
14	FIELDWORK PRIORITIES: CHILDREN, YOUNG ADULTS, AND EDUCATION	VSF has made the decision to channel its efforts towards fieldwork, children and youth, and specifically towards projects in education. This is because VSF considers quality education to be the best tool to break the vicious circle created by inadequate education, joblessness, and poverty. In other words, VSF works with children and youth, because it considers them to represent the most vulnerable sector, to be the recipients of the least amount of public political help, and to be the "future" of the country and the region.
15	ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY	Ethical and transparent conduct should be observed in the management of all institutional issues. This principle becomes of vital importance when dealing with, among other things, accounting, legal, administrative, and financial issues. This means that all volunteers should have access to institutional information, and demand that institutional issues be dealt with in an ethical, clear and honorable manner. ALL OF VSF'S FINANCIAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON THE VSF WEBSITE.

16	GRATUITY	At VSF, we believe that volunteers should work in accordance with one of VSF's basic principles -- volunteerism should be free of charge. This implies that individuals are not paid for their participation, but more importantly, THAT THEY ARE NOT CHARGED A MEMBERSHIP FEE. VSF knows that other organizations do not follow this same path (i.e. they do charge membership fees, and in some cases, very high fees). VSF feels that to charge volunteers a fee is to commercialize them, which is contrary to the nature of volunteerism. However, VSF does need economic resources to function, and, for that reason, VSF encourages volunteers to involve themselves in VSF's financing mechanisms (see "How is VSF financed?" below).
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HOW IS VSF ORGANIZED?

VSF is a non-profit, social service association, with its non-profit legal status granted by the Inspección General de Justicia (IGJ).

Therefore, like all social service organizations, VSF has a formal organizational structure that arises from its bylaws. The internal branches of VSF are:

- The Directive Commission (Department of Administration), which is in charge of determining the general direction of the institution and concerns itself with administrative, legal, and accounting issues as well as with institutional relations;
- The Department of Finance, which is in charge of fiscal control of the operations of the Directive Commission and oversees proper institutional functioning; and
- The Assembly of Associates (Board of Directors), the most important body of the institution, which elects the officers of the organization, approves financial reports and makes major decisions.

Unlike other organizations, however, VSF also provides opportunities for peer discussion and decision making. Through the meetings named "Plenarias" (Plenary Sessions), held once a month, all of the members of VSF can discuss the functioning of a project, assume responsibilities, propose an idea, etc.

EXCHANGE PROJECTS

The principle activity of VSF is the development of exchange projects. This is realized through three central actions:

PROJECT	OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS
Exchange trips to other countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the strengthening of appropriate projects. • Provide training for volunteers or leaders who travel. • Stimulate the strengthening of ties between communities. • Generate instances of dialogue and exchange of ideas, actions, and values, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Activities for direct volunteerism. ✓ Training sessions. ✓ Technical discussions. ✓ Dialogue with university students, state dignitaries, businessmen, etc. ✓ Preliminary training: creation and reading of documents, elaborated through presentations.

Reception of Contingents for Exchange Experiences in Argentina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the strengthening of appropriate projects. • Provide training for volunteers or leaders who travel. • Stimulate the strengthening of ties between communities. • Generate instances of dialogue and exchange of ideas, actions, and values, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Activities for direct volunteerism ✓ Training sessions. ✓ Technical discussions. ✓ Dialogue with university students, state dignitaries, businessmen, etc. ✓ Social activities, and knowledge of the culture, the history and the reality of life in Buenos Aires and Argentina.
Reception of Groups in Buenos Aires for an Extensive Period (four months or more)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate instances of integration between foreign and Argentine volunteers. • Channel the good will of Argentines who come to Buenos Aires. • Create a framework for communication with external organizations that are also dedicated to the exchange of volunteers. 	

As part of this project, there have already been eight exchanges: on four occasions, VSF was visited by groups of volunteers from other countries (mainly from Brazil), and, on four other occasions, VSF paid for groups (volunteers and leaders from various social service organizations) to travel to San Pablo (2005), Montevideo (2006) and twice to Santiago (2007). In 2007, there will be another exchange experience in the city of Santiago de Chile from the 6th to the 11th of November.

Key Points for these Projects:

- Promotion of the strengthening of ties between communities and the circulation of a series of propositions such as cooperative globalization, advocacy of volunteerism, cultural diversity, especially in the social framework of the MERCOSUR region (Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil).
- Exchange of practical knowledge about how to resolve various social problems, eg. social benchmarking, where different organizations from diverse communities or countries exchange points of view and methods for working toward the daily solution of problems.
- Generation of strong ties among organizations that share common interests, making use of the interpersonal relationships between leaders and volunteers. Therefore, VSF makes a commitment to creating ample time for the exchange of points of view regarding these themes.
- Inauguration of the possibility of creating time for international work among organizations that are similar or that share some special interest regarding a particular issue.
- Get in contact with various organizations that work on specific issues. That way, VSF can learn about organizations similar to VSF in the receiving country and the reality and methods that they work with.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT, FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE PROJECTS, VSF HAS A **SOLIDARITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**, WHICH COVERS TRANSPORTATION (AIRFARE AND LOCAL TRANSPORT), FOOD, LODGING AND OPERATING EXPENSES. THUS FAR, VSF HAS PROVIDED **FULL** SCHOLARSHIPS TO 80% OF PARTICIPANTS. THE REMAINDER OF THE SCHOLARSHIPS, HAVE ASSUMED PAYMENT OF ONLY THAT PORTION OF THE EXPENSES WHICH IS NOT

ALREADY COVERED BY OTHER MEANS. IN OTHER WORDS: VSF DOES NOT CHARGE A FEE TO THOSE WHO WISH TO PARTICIPATE.

CURRENT FIELD PROJECTS

PROGRAM #1: “Vecinitos del Mundo” (“Neighbors of the World”)

Location: Grupo Comunitario Los Vecinitos. Villa 3. Villa Soldati.

Day and Time: Tuesday from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Months of Operation: March through December.

Transportation: Premetro – Buses 46, 150, and 91.

Meeting Place for Volunteers: The “Virreyes” station on Subte line E.

Objectives:

- To promote the education of children and adolescents.
- To develop skills for informal education through knowledge of language (English and Portuguese), through recreation and through the transmission of values.
- To generate a space of reflexion between the Argentine and foreign volunteers, as well as between the volunteers and the children who attend the program.

Activities:

- English Workshop.
- Portuguese Workshop.
- Recreational Activities.
- Snack.

Volunteer Profile: at least 17 years of age, intermediate or advanced Spanish, knowledge of other languages (English or Portuguese), informational or recreational skills, responsible and able to work in groups. No other areas of previous study required.
(Minimum time of residency in Argentina: 12 weeks)

PROGRAM # 2: Traducciones para VSF (Translating for VSF)

Location: The VSF office. Rivadavia 2890, 4th floor, Office 308.

Day and Time: Monday and Thursday from 9 am to 12 pm; or Wednesday from 4pm to 7pm.

Transportation: Subway line A (Station Plaza de Miserere); Buses 5, 105, 86, 7, 132, 75, 68, 41, 118, 61, and 71.

Months of Operation: All year long.

Volunteer Meeting Place: The VSF office. Rivadavia 2890, 4th Floor, Office 308.

Objectives:

- To promote the exchange of volunteers in the city of Buenos Aires and on an international level.
- To generate materials for the purpose of disseminating VSF's objectives.
- To immerse foreign volunteers in the Spanish language.

Activities:

- Translate VSF's website - www.voluntariossf.org.ar
- Translate VSF documents.
- Translate didactic material, pamphlets and books for the Soup Kitchen, “Los Vecinitos”, and “Nuestros Derechos” activities.
- Link VSF's website with websites in other languages.

Volunteer Profile: at least 17 years of age, intermediate spanish, knowledge of other languages (english, portuguese, german, french, russian, mandarin, etc.), and/or informational skills, able to work in groups, responsible. No other areas of previous study required.
(Minimum time of residency in Argentina: 2 weeks)

PROGRAM #3: “Plan Techos” (“The Roofing Plan”)

Location: San Miguel. Provincia de Buenos Aires.

Day and Time: TBA (ONLY 2 ACTIVITIES ANNUALLY)

Transportation: The Urquiza Train.

Activity developed in association with the “Roof Plan Foundation”

Months of Operation: Twice—once in April and once in September.

Volunteer Meeting Place: The Urquiza Station (The Federico Lacroze Station on Subte Line B – Buses: 176, 39, 63, 42, 47, 168, 123, and 93).

Objectives:

- Collaborate with residents of the neighborhood in the building of their own homes.
- Bettering the living conditions of the inhabitants of the neighborhood.
- Developing a mechanism of communication among residents, argentine volunteers and foreigners, and other social/civil organizations capable of action in matters of health, education, etc.

Activities:

- Collaboration with the residents as they build their own homes: preparation of materials, construction of walls, etc.
- Activities of integration.
- Afternoon meal.

Volunteer Profile: 21 or older, intermediate or advanced Spanish. Preferably men. Knowledge or experience in construction or repair of houses is valuable. No other areas of previous study required. Responsible and able to work well in groups.
(Minimum time of residency in Argentina: 6 weeks).

PROGRAM #4: Almuerzos en Vecinitos (Lunches in Neighborhoods)

Location: Grupo Comunitario Los Vecinitos. Villa 3. Villa Soldati.

Day and Time: Monday through Friday from 11:00am to 2:00pm (it is not necessary to come every day)

Transportation: Busses 46, 150, and 91.

Months of Operation: February through December.

Volunteer Meeting Place: The Virreyes Station on Subway line E.

Objectives:

- Collaborate with the food service offered by the “Community Group” for more than 250 people per day (mostly children).

Activities:

- Offer the food to the people who attend.
- Collect and clean plates, silverware, and cups.
- General collaboration with the cooks.

Perfil del Voluntario: at least 17 years of age, intermediate or advanced Spanish. No other areas of previous study required. Responsible and able to work well in groups. Please note that the activity is strictly about providing food (it is not permitted to engage in other activities with those who attend - especially the children).

(Minimum time of residency in Argentina: 1 week).

PROGRAM #5: Voluntariado en Prevención de VIH-SIDA (Prevention of HIV-AIDS)

Location: Different places in the city of Buenos Aires (historic or touristy); offices of OSC Volunteers Without Borders (Rivadavia 2890, 4th Floor, Office 308), and AIDS Foundation of Buenos Aires (Alberdi 2049)

Day and Time: TBA

Activity developed with the help of the AIDS Foundation of Buenos Aires (Fundación Buenos Aires Sida)

Months of Operation: March/April through December

Objectives:

- Promote means of prevention of HIV/AIDS in the general population, but with a focus on foreign visitors in the City of Buenos Aires.
- Spread the word about the City of Buenos Aires' free offer of help in matters of health to tourists that visit Buenos Aires.
- Channel the good will of foreign volunteers.
- Generate materials about the prevention of HIV/AIDS.
- Provide information and means of prevention to vulnerable populations.

Activities:

- Distribution of condoms in public campaigns.
- Development of conversations about prevention in hostels, schools, community groups, jails, clubs, etc.
- Posting of fliers and delivery of brochures to hostels, language schools, and public touristy places (Caminito, Plaza de Mayo, Puerto Madero, etc)

Volunteer Profile: Over 21, intermediate or advanced level of Spanish, knowledge of other languages (Portuguese or English). No other areas of previous study required. Responsible, with the capacity to work well in groups. Medical knowledge is valuable. (Minimum time of residency in Argentina: 4 months).

PROGRAM #6: "Voluntariado en Idealistas" ("Volunteering for 'Idealists'")

Location: Portal's office www.idealistas.org (Viamonte 1181, 6th Floor)

Day and Time: Sometime between 10:00am and 6:00 pm, at your convenience.

Transportation: Subway Line D (The Tribunales Station); Buses 5, 39, 67, 100, 109, 132, 59, and 180.

Months of Operation: All year long.

Volunteer Meeting Place: The "Idealists" office.

Objectives:

- Promote solidarity and volunteerism on an international level.
- Generate skills with the goal of furthering the objectives of "Idealists".
- Collaborate with the institutional strengthening of OSC (principally Argentines)

- Put foreign volunteers in contact with the Spanish language in a fluid manner.

Activities:

- Translation of the “Idealists” website into a variety of languages.
- Translation of the “Idealists” documents.
- Investigations into how to develop the civil associations of various countries around the world.
- Bringing “Idealists” together with various social/civil organizations so they can use their services.

Volunteer Profile: at least 18 years of age, intermediate or advanced Spanish, with knowledge of other languages (Portuguese or English, German, French, Russian, Mandarin, etc.), and computer skills. Responsible and able to work well in groups. Professionals in the areas of translation, computing, language, and non-profit organizations are valuable.
(Minimum time of residency in Argentina: 6 weeks).

PROGRAM #7: “Aprender Jugando en Villa 31” (“Learning to Play in Villa 31”)

Location: Villa 31 in Retiro.

Day and Time: Saturdays from 10:00am to 12:30pm.

Transportation: Subway Line C (The Retiro Station); Buses 5, 92, 33, 126, 152, 93, 132, 106, and 188.

Activity in partnership with Our Rights Kitchen (Comedor Nuestros Derechos) and the Association for the Future of the Children (Asociación Por el Futuro de los Chicos)

Months of Operation: March through December.

Volunteer Meeting Place: Puerto 5, the Omnibus Station in Retiro

Objectives:

- Better the educational conditions of the children and adolescents through play, the promotion of values, and the teaching of languages.
- Promote play as a mechanism of assimilation into society, principally for adolescents and children.
- Create alternatives that help children and adolescents stay away from addictions and delinquency.
- Promote a spirit of unity, social activism, and human values in the children.
- Create a space of integration between the children of the neighborhood, the Argentine volunteers, and the foreigners present.

Activities:

- Recreational time
- Breakfasts
- Welcome chats
- Speaking with social/civil organizations about other topics: preventions of HIV/AIDS, sexuality, etc.
- Outdoor sports

Volunteer Profile: at least 18 years of age, intermediate or advanced Spanish. Responsible and able to work well in groups. A desire to develop educational or recreational activities is valuable as is previous experience in the field.

(Minimum time of residency in Argentina: 12 weeks).

PROGRAM #8: Herramientas Informáticas para Los Vecinitos (Informational Skills for the Neighborhoods)

Location: Grupo Comunitario Los Vecinitos. Villa 3. Villa Soldati.

Day and Time: Tuesday from 2:00pm to 4:00pm and Wednesday from 3:00pm to 5:00pm.

Transportation: Buses 46, 150, and 91.

Months of Operation: March through December.

Volunteer Meeting Place: The Virreyes Station on Subway Line E.

Objectives:

- Better the educational conditions of adolescents and children through the teaching of basic computer skills (word, excel, internet, and other programs).
- Give skills to adults, so that they can pass this knowledge on to their children.

Activities:

- Development of a basic computer skills workshop.
- Afternoon Meal.

Volunteer Profile: at least 18 years of age, intermediate or advanced Spanish. Responsible and able to work well in groups. Preferably with advanced computer skills (a college degree is not required). (Minimum time of residency in Argentina: 8 weeks).

PROGRAM #9: “Voluntariado con CREAMU” (Volunteering with CREAMU)

Location: Grupo Comunitario Los Vecinitos. Activity in partnership with the civil association CREAMU (Creating the Future).

Day and Time: Saturdays from 3:00pm to 6:00pm.

Transportation: Buses 46, 150, and 91.

Months of Operation: March through December.

Volunteer Meeting Place: The Virreyes Station on Subway Line E.

Objectives:

- Promote the participation of children and adolescents in their own education.
- Develop informal educational skills through the development of an Educational Project (based on helping with schoolwork, teaching values, and recreation).
- Create a space for reflexion between the foreign and argentine volunteers, and between them and the kids that attend.

Activities:

- Educational workshop.
- Recreational activities.
- Afternoon snack.
- Excursions (outings at least two times per year)

Volunteer Profile: at least 17 years of age, intermediate or advanced Spanish, knowledge of educational materials or recreation. No other areas of previous study required, but training in teaching is valuable. Responsible and able to work well in groups. (Minimum time of residency in Argentina: 4 months).

How to become involved: After the informational meeting with VSF, the volunteer should participate in another similar encounter with the Volunteer Coordinator of CREAMU, and then in a basic training program about educational issues.

PROGRAM #10: “Revista Comunitaria” (“Community Newspaper”)

Since August 2007, a group of VSF volunteers has been working on the implementation of a project that's final product would be a MAGAZINE that would spread the word about VSF and its ideas.

The magazine would be designed, developed, and distributed by a group of five youth between the ages of 16 and 21, youth from various low-income neighborhoods in the city of Buenos Aires (principally Soldati).

The office of the Group Comunitario Los Vecenitos de la Villa 3 will be used as a workspace (since we have all of our computers there and we come there to work on a regular basis).

The youth who participate, as an "educational incentive", will receive a small sum of money, that will ideally:

- Better the quality of their life and that of their family's.
- Motivate them to do well in school, lowering the potential school dropout rate, and improving their chances of a University level education.
- Involve them in a project that could be an alternative space, giving them values and forming their talents and abilities. The initiative hopes to give them an all-around education that includes other aspects of life like: reproductive and sexual health, family planning, budgeting, solidarity, etc.

This project is currently in the planning stages, and is hoping to initiate the search for potential youth and the development of the magazine shortly.

Location: Grupo Comunitario Los Vecenitos.

Day and Time: TBA. Principally Saturdays from 3:00pm to 6:00pm; and one day a week from 6:00pm to 7:30 at the VSF office (Rivadavia 2890, 4th Floor, Office 308)

Transportation: Buses 46, 150, and 91.

Months of Operation: February through December

Activities:

- Workshops about writing, photography, design (CorelDraw, etc.), interviews, distribution, logistics, etc., to help realize the publication of the magazine.
- Languages (complementary)

Volunteer Profile: 24 or older, fluent in Spanish, experience in education and preferably a student or graduate student majoring in Communication, Journalism, Photography, Publicity, Design, Public Relations, Administration, etc. Training in teaching is valuable. Responsible and able to work well in groups.

(Minimum time of residency in Argentina: 4 months).

PROGRAM #11: "Deporte Social Por el Futuro de los Chicos" ("Social Sports for the Future of the Kids")

Location: Villa 31 in Retiro.

Day and Time: Saturdays from 8:00am to 5:00pm (once a month from March to December).

Transportation: Subway Line C (The Retiro Station); Buses 5, 92, 33, 126, 152, 93, 132, 106, and 188.

Activity in partnership with the Association for the Future of the Kids (Asociación Por el Futuro de los Chicos).

Months of Operation: February through December, time and date TBA.

Volunteer Meeting Place: The Coto supermarket, located in front of the Retiro Omnibus Terminal.

Objectives:

- Better the educational conditions of children and adolescents through recreation, sports and relaxation.

- Promote sports and recreation as a means of social assimilation, principally for adolescents and youth.
- Create alternatives that help adolescents and youth stay away from addictions and delinquency.
- Promote a spirit of unity, social activeness and human values in the youth.
- Create a space for bonding between the youth of the neighborhood, the Argentine volunteers, and the foreigners present.

Activities:

- The central activity will be to accompany the children and their coordinators to the Popular Soccer Tournaments that take place once a month at the Junior Argentine Club Installations (Villa Soldati). The volunteers will leave from the villa with the kids and spend the day with them, during which they will participate in the following activities among others:
 - Tour of the city in the bus (from the Villa to the Club and back)
 - Accompaniment at the games.
 - Logistical Aspects: handing out jerseys, helping the coach, warming up.
 - Serve breakfast.
 - Realization of the games and other recreational activities.
 - Accompaniment, motivation, exchanges, etc.

Volunteer Profile: at least 18 years of age, intermediate or advanced Spanish. Responsible and able to work well in groups. The desire to develop educational, recreational and/or sports-oriented activities is valuable as is previous experience in the field.

(Minimum time of residency in Argentina: these are short-term activities; the volunteer must be available that day).

PROGRAM #12: “Proyecto de Verano con Pibes de la 31” (“Summer Project with the Kids of Villa 31”)

Location: Villa 31 in Retiro.

Day and Time: Saturdays from 10:30am to 1:00pm.

Transportation: Subway Line C (The Retiro Station); Buses 5, 92, 33, 126, 152, 93, 132, 106, and 188.

Activity in partnership with the Civil Association of the Kids of Villa 31 (Asociación Civil Los Pibes de la 31).

Months of Operation: Summer Project from January to the end of March

Volunteer Meeting Place: Puerto 5, the Retiro Omnibus Station

Objectives:

- Better the educational conditions and social skills of children and adolescents through recreation, cultural activities, relaxation, and educational outings.
- Use recreation as a mechanism for social reintegration, principally for children and adolescents.
- Promote a collective spirit, social skills, and human values in the youth.
- Create a place for interaction between the children of the neighborhood and Argentine and foreign volunteers.

Activities:

- Recreation.
- Cultural Activities (art workshops, crafts, painting, etc).
- Breakfasts.
- Welcoming chats.
- Watching kids movies and educational films.
- Outdoor sports.
- Educational/Recreational Outings (to museums, movies theaters, theme parks, the ecological reserve, etc.)

Volunteer Profile: at least 18 years of age, intermediate or advanced Spanish. Responsible and able to work well in groups. The desire to develop educational, recreational and/or sports-oriented activities is valuable as is previous experience in the field.

(Minimum time of residency in Argentina: it is recommended that the volunteer be able to participate from 8:00am to 10:00am every Saturday during the Summer Program).

PROGRAM #13: “Viajes Solidarios a la Patagonia” (Solidarity Trips to Patagonia”)

Location: The town of Junín in the Andes, Neuquén Providence, Patagonia, Argentina.

Day and Time: The trips are between two and three weeks long.

Transportation: Travel by Omnibus to the city of Junín in the Andes.
Activity in partnership with the Crossing Patagonia Foundation (Fundación Cruzada Patagónica).

Months of Operation: To start with there will be two trips per year (one in January and one in September).

Objectives:

- Collaborate with the educational growth of the youth that attend the San Ignacio CEI school.
- Support the development and running of the Crossing Patagonia Foundation.
- Foster cultural exchange.
- Start a new project through the joint work of VSF and the Crossing Patagonia Foundation.
- Give the participants new knowledge, social experiences, and skills for their academic, social and human growth.
- Along with this, learn from the culture, the history, and the geography of one of the most marvelous places of Argentina’s Patagonia region.

Activities:

- Participation in the student’s classes at the school (History, Philosophy, English, Physical Education, Sports, etc.), fostering cultural exchange.
- Involvement in agro-technical activities: at farms, planting trees for forestation and fruit, raising animal (chickens, pigs, cows, llamas, horses).
- Interaction with other social organizations in the area; among these indigenous communities (in the Mapuches region).
- Cultural activities (art workshops, crafts, painting, etc.)
- Breakfasts, lunches, and dinners.
- Welcoming chats.
- Outings to the countryside.
- Outdoor Sports.
- Sightseeing.

The cost of the trip is up to each volunteer; even though neither VSF nor Cruzada Patagónica charges a “fee”, the price of the trip is necessary to pay for lodging, food, and local transportation.

Volunteer Profile: at least 18 years of age, intermediate or advanced Spanish. Responsible and able to work well in groups. The desire to develop educational, recreational and/or sports-oriented activities is valuable as is previous experience in the field.

(Minimum time of residency in Argentina: it is necessary to participate in the trip in its entirety— that is to say, two or three weeks, depending on the trip).

PROGRAM # 14: ORGANIZATIONAL DEPARTMENTS OF VSF

At VSF we are developing a process for incorporating new volunteers that can, by means of this collective social service project, utilize their capabilities, talents, knowledge, and experience, to help the community and strengthen the institution in particular.

In this sense, VSF attempts to:

- Carry out a series of organizational aspects of VSF.
- Bring new members into the group VSF calls the “core group” (or nucleus).

A more detailed explanation of both points:

The core group is the part of VSF that involves the Directive Commission (Department of Administration), the executive direction, and the coordination of all of the projects.

VSF’s intention is to bring new members that can form part of this group, whose missions are:

- Make central decisions about general aspects of VSF.
- Define the functions of the fieldwork and projects.
- Designate project coordinators, department coordinators, etc.
- Chose the destinations for the annual exchange trips and select the beneficiaries of the scholarships given out by VSF.
- Expound upon the annual budget, and oversee the distribution of the finances.
- Schedule projects, activities and events.
- Strategically outline the advancement of institutional relations, on a national level as well as an on international one.

The way to bring about said incorporation is through three concrete acts:

- Invite people to participate in the “plenarias” (plenary meetings) that take place at our office every 15 or 20 days.
- Adding the new volunteer to VSF’s e-mail list, through which the most detailed information about the organization is circulated.
- Finding the place/event/project that the volunteer will join (and could maybe coordinate one day).

Here, it should be clarified that: the only people who can form part of the core group of volunteers are those who normally reside in Argentina, or those who can stay for a considerable period of time (a minimum of nine or ten months). Volunteers who can not stay for this long can help with other short-term aspects of the institution.

These are the four institutional departments:

DEPARTMENT	FUNCTIONS
International Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the international network (REDAFI). • Searching for volunteers and social service organizations in other countries.. • Participating in meetings with Cancillería Argentina and Cooperación Internacional. • Systematic management of international friends.
Volunteer Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orchestrating foreign volunteers. • Coordinating social gatherings. • Interviewing and training new volunteers. • Coordinating fieldwork.
Resource Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orchestrating foreign volunteers. • Coordinating social gatherings. • Interviewing and training new volunteers. • Coordinating fieldwork.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design of VSF’s web page. • Press. • Communication plan. • Development of communication tools for international friends and volunteers.

HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER

At VSF we promote a serious and responsible volunteer. As such, volunteers should follow the following path:

- 1) Join by telephone or e-mail.
- 2) Participate in an informal chat with a member of VSF.
- 3) Make a decision about the project/s you would like to participate in and communicate that by e-mail or telephone.

- 4) Participate (depending on the project), in a specific capacity (free).
- 5) Start participating in a project of your choosing. The first day of the activity you should sign a **ACUERDO BÁSICO COMUN** (COMMON BASIC AGREEMENT) (in accordance with the Argentine Volunteer Law N° 25.855)
- 6) Attend the planning meetings for each of the projects you chose.

HOW IS VSF FINANCED?

VSF finances itself principally through the following methods:

- The realization of events two or three times a year (for example: International Food Dish Fairs)
- The sale of merchandise, for example: t-shirts y calendar with the VSF logo.
- The support of benefactors or individual donors, those who regularly give (monthly, weekly, or annually) a determined sum of money.
- The presentation of projects in front of a public or private, national or international assembly.
- The gathering of resources ante **Empresas con Programas de Responsabilidad Social (RSE)**
- Special donations, campaigns, and donations or offerings from ex-volunteers around the world.
- Volunteer training sessions (intensive courses) given by specialists in the field (who are volunteering themselves, that is, they do not charge a fee to lecture).

As it was explained in the principles table, VSF does not charge the volunteers or the organizations who participate in its initiatives. However, the necessity of having resources for the development of the projects leads us to seek “involvement from the volunteers regarding this important topic”. Therefore we do not oblige anyone to donate, but if appropriate, VSF can communicate to the volunteers the ways in which they can help fund the projects of VSF, so that they can decide to “donate in cases of special interest”. The ways (in descending order from simple to complex) that volunteers have to help fund VSF are:

* Buy a t-shirt
* Buy an calendar or sell some to your friends, family, etc.
* Participate in an Event or The International Potluck and invite friends to attend.
* Make yourself a Social Benefactor, or look for potential donors amongst your friends and family.
* Become a Sponsor, providing full funding for an Exchange Volunteer.
* Fundraise among friends and family in Argentina or abroad.
* Going to the business or PYME of a family member of friend, in order ask them about financing a a project.
* Enrolling in the Volunteer Training Course (ask for more information)
NOTE: Other kinds of contributions can be made as well. It is not necessary contribute exclusively money.

VSF considers transparency as one of it's most important principals. As such, we posses all of the respective formalities necessary in order to guarantee it:

- Juridical Legal Status
- Current Libros Sociales
- Current Autoridades
- CUIT.
- Earnings that are Tax Exempt.
- A bank account in the name of VSF: in which VSF can make deposits or bank transfers.
- Fiscal Receipts (C)
- Capacity to sign Agreements or Contracts.

WHAT DOES VSF EXPECT FROM IT'S VOLUNTEERS?

At **VSF**, participation in the various institutional areas that exist is considered very important because there is a direct relationship between participation in the fieldwork, the institutional areas, and the planning and results of the activities that are undertaken. The more the volunteers involve themselves institutionally—the better the achieved results.

Each volunteer that would like to join VSF, we ask that they undertake each activity with commitment and responsibility. At VSF we primarily work with children and adolescents, and they generate very affective

relationships with the volunteers. Hence, it is of utmost importance that the volunteers follow a set of general rules:

- Each new volunteer has to establish what time they will dedicate each week to the realization of activities.
- Also, they must meet the minimum time period requirement as established by the project. For example: you can commit to participate every Tuesday in the Neighbors of the World Project for a minimum period of four months.
- It is important to take the volunteer work seriously and comply with the assumed responsibilities, unless there is a real impediment that justifies your absence.
- Finally, if the volunteer can not participate (for whatever reason), they should communicate such with the leader of the project, and with as much warning as is possible.