

Volunteer Tourism

As part of our commitment to advancing sustainable tourism, we encourage our tourism partners to improve their sustainability performance by providing them with the guidance below.

- ✓ Ensure applicable legal **permits** are in place, including at host projects
- ✓ Ensure **insurance** is in place for volunteers and team
- ✓ Identify **health & safety risks**, implement management systems, and provide appropriate safety equipment
- ✓ Ensure enough team members are available in case of **emergency**
- ✓ Monitor activity area conditions in advance & during the activity
- ✓ Conduct **background checks** for volunteer placements with vulnerable groups, and only consider this when volunteers have relevant expertise
- ✓ Implement necessary **safeguards** for placements with vulnerable groups, including supervision and ensuring separate overnight accommodation for volunteers
- ✓ Prohibit placements where volunteers are **primary caregivers** at vulnerable group facilities
- ✓ **Screen volunteers** to make sure that placement is a match for their skills and interests
- ✓ Ensuring **continuity** of programme objectives after volunteer placements, e.g., through partnerships with existing initiatives
- ✓ Engage host project in **design and management** of volunteer programme, including number and selection of volunteers
- ✓ Maximise local **economic benefits** through employment and supporting local businesses
- ✓ Work with, not instead of, local people, ensuring **skills transfer** to host project
- ✓ Provide **transparency** regarding proportion of total fee paid to host project
- ✓ Provide **information in advance** about the project's longer-term sustainability vision, activity accessibility, what to expect, and what to bring with
- ✓ Obtain written confirmation, e.g., via **indemnity**, that participants are aware of activity risks
- ✓ **Brief participants** about do's and don'ts, safety, what to expect, applicable etiquette / conduct to be respectful of, and logistical considerations before the placement begins
- ✓ **Share information about** local nature and culture, and social development / conservation projects that participants may want to support
- ✓ Provide **meaningful placement** content so that the experience is rewarding for all parties
- ✓ Provide local **supervision** / contact point for volunteers
- ✓ Avoid single use & disposable items, provide adequate **waste** collection facilities for safe disposal, and pick up rubbish in the local area
- ✓ Be **waterwise** and take pro-active measures to use water sparingly
- ✓ Minimise **energy** used in the activity as part of a climate action strategy
- ✓ Obtain **feedback** at end of placement debriefing
- ✓ Maintain **communication** with volunteers, sending organisations, and host projects after placements
- ✓ Contribute to conserving activity area **integrity**; let relevant authorities know about any concerns and participate in rehabilitation projects