

Association for International and Intercultural Exchange "ANAWOJ"

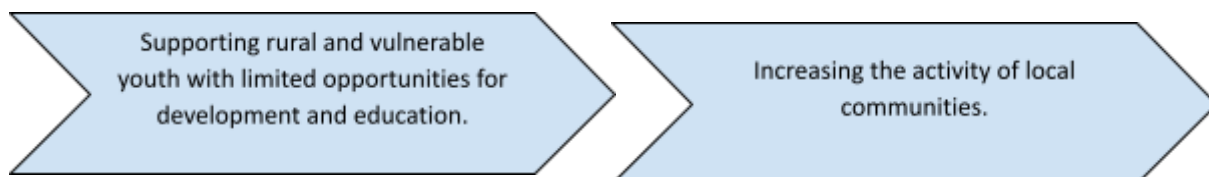
☐ Description

Our association has been operating continuously since 2002. We are an organization from a rural area, and we operate primarily in underprivileged areas. We support and encourage the youth and the local community in our region to try to organize themselves and start influencing their surroundings more actively. We want to make them realize that passively waiting "at the ready" makes them mere consumers of what they get.



We also strive to establish a sustainable international exchange of experience and dialogue between partners from Poland and abroad, promote the idea of international volunteering, diversity and environmental and ecological activities.

We have focused for years on:



Since the beginning our main activity is Volunteering. From 2002 until now, we have managed to send more than 100 Polish volunteers to various countries under EVS/ ESC. And since 2006, we have invited foreign volunteers to our region - the number of coordinated and hosted volunteers - also more than 100.

☐ Cooperation with many projects.

We also support institutions in rural areas to encourage them to work with foreign volunteers and international cooperation (e.g., community centers and occupational therapy workshops). We work with many educational institutions (kindergartens, schools, etc.) to enable them to expand and supplement their educational offerings. We also support special schools and the education of disabled people.

Within the framework of the ESC program, we implement each year the following projects:

- ***"Future in our hands" Project of individual long-term volunteering.***

We organize long-term voluntary activities in 9 institutions in the Podlasie region. On the one hand, these are educational institutions - such as: Primary School in Gródek and 3 special schools in Białystok; and on the other hand, cultural centers (in Michałowo, Gródek, Suchowola, Narewka and Dąbrowa Białostocka). Besides, we hosted volunteers in our association.

Project participants supported the educational and cultural activities of their host organizations on a daily basis. They disseminated their own culture, promoted diversity, intercultural dialogue, other views and approaches, tried to activate the community with various methods, aroused interest in being different, and diversified the standard education system with interesting and activating elements.

As part of the complementary activity "Ecology in the theater", we managed to develop an original script for a theatrical performance entitled "Traces". The performance tells the story of two groups of friends who went camping and there they wanted to organize a birthday for a friend. One group cares about the environment, segregates rubbish, while the other group does not pay attention to these matters. However, after a joint discussion on ecology and a few lessons passed on, they change their minds and notice that it is very important for the common good

- **Group volunteering "Green Heroes"**

The main subject of this activity is ecology and caring for the environment. Volunteers live for the duration of the project in an ecological camp near Michalow, which they will build themselves. They will experience zero waste living - They will learn how to collect herbs for consumption, build a sand clay oven, build a compost toilet, and build a solar shower. In the organic camp, volunteers cook their own food with ingredients from nature, on their own built stove, and can feel that an ecological lifestyle is not just empty words, but something very concrete. They also act as and function as educators of ecology and take this idea, knowledge and skills to the local community.

- **Group volunteering "mix of creativity":**

Volunteers become animators of creative activities. They will disseminate their own culture, promote diversity, intercultural dialogue, other views and approaches, activate society through various creative methods (including theater, music, circus, art), arouse interest in otherness, and diversify the leisure time of the local community with interesting, creative and activating elements. During the course of the project, we visited various educational institutions, socio-therapeutic day care centers and schools, where volunteers conducted workshops and creative activities.

We also carry out permanent and regular activities in the field of nature and environmental education, such as in the form of forest workshops, semi-colonies in the forest, classes in schools and theatrical performances. Examples of such activities are:

- Workshop with preschoolers "Nature's Dwarfs" („Krasnoludki przyrody”) - or how children will discover the forest for themselves. The aim of the project is to develop environmental awareness through nature education, and at the same time to form a positive attitude to the forest, which is the natural environment of children.
- Annual summer semi-colon "Holidays in the Forest" („Wakacje w lesie”). We organize summer semi-colonies for children aged 3 to 12, which are mainly held in the forest and outdoors. We promote active spending of time in nature and stimulate children's development of fantasy and imagination and creative approach to the environment.

We also conduct cultural activities:



- Every year we prepare theatrical performances with our European volunteers, which we present in various local communities. In these performances, we touch on topics related to diversity, ecology, fair trade, etc. We have already reached hundreds of people in small towns with our performances, and they are very popular with the locals.
- Summer semi-colon "*intercultural weeks*" („*tygodnie międzykulturowe*") for children from rural areas to learn more about other cultures, languages and traditions. This is organized periodically in cooperation with community centers in our region.

☐ **ANAWOJ as ESC Host organization**

As an organization, we want to actively participate in the development of our region and give others the opportunity to participate with us in the creation of uncommon everyday life. To be socially active is to have an impact not only on our own lives, but also on the lives of our neighbors - on what our common future will be. Within the framework of the "*Local Animator*" activity, we want to host foreign volunteers at our organization in Michałowo for long-term individual volunteering.

During the preparation phase, we will introduce each volunteer to their tasks, rights and responsibilities. Upon their arrival, we will discuss and explain them again to make sure everyone understands everything and has a clear description of their role in our project. The initial plan of action will be tailored upon the volunteer's arrival according to their skills and interests.

• **Volunteer profile**

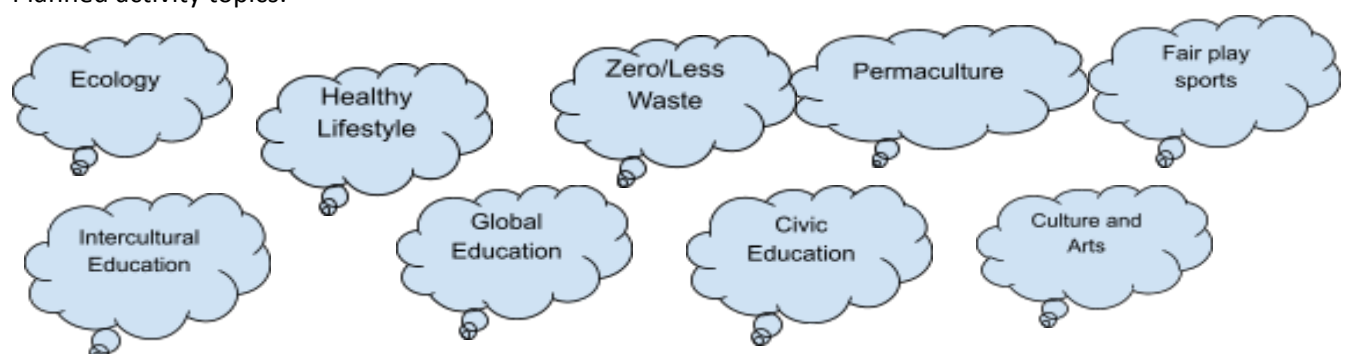
We do not expect participants to have a specific education or skills. Volunteers are young people who mostly want to gain different experiences, learn something new, and prove themselves in different fields. They will promote through their activities the intercultural and solidarity aspect in the local community. These will often be activities that a paid employee does not have time for, or that are not provided for in the employees' contracts. Therefore, volunteers will be a kind of bridging this gap, offering for the target groups what is lacking in formal education or cultural offerings on a daily basis.

- Main tasks:

Volunteers will support all the day-to-day operations of our organization - mainly in three different areas:

- Assist in project management and office work
- Organizing and conducting creative, active and outdoor activities as a "local animator"
- Assist in conducting educational workshops with local partner institutions (e.g., community center, Kindergarten, Elementary and High School, and Occupational Therapy Workshops for people with disabilities and others in our community).

Planned activity topics:



Examples of planned activities:

- Assisting in office work (creating posters, leaflets, flyers, presentations).
- Support our local and international activities with different methods, games, workshops.
- Conducting "*European workshops*" in school, kindergarten and therapy center for disabled people.
- Support in the school club by preparation and organizing of sport or art activities and workshops for kids.
- Organization of language courses and cultural workshops.
- Creation of own activities (in the field of sport, music, theater, multimedia, literature, languages, etc.) and animation of the local community.

We want to add additional tasks related to the theme of the project "ecology" to the general tasks of volunteers in each activity. There will be workshops on the "low and zero waste" principle, knowledge about the carbon footprint of each of us and eco-friendly behavior in everyday life.

We would like volunteers to become "*ambassadors of ecology*" and that they would be able to include this subject in their daily work at their facility, through:

- conducting ecological workshops for children and youth;
- organizing competitions and contests on the methods of ecological behavior;
- promoting the subject of ecology and "low waste" through media activities (YouTube videos, blogging, etc.).

In addition, we are planning joint forest and public areas cleaning actions. Volunteers will take part in various local actions, in regional fairs in order to activate the society and will be involved in promoting the European Solidarity Corps.

Valuable here will be the experience of working with a specific target group and the subsequent reflection on whether the volunteer wants to continue or deepen work in this particular field after the project. Such experiences and challenges strengthen self-reliance and entrepreneurship in volunteers, develop in them the ability to act flexibly and the ability to activate and animate others - this can influence their choice of career path in the future.

Volunteers will gain new or develop existing skills in:

- Knowledge of intercultural education, environmental education, formal, non-formal and informal education;
- Learning animation techniques, methods of working with children and young people (including people with disabilities), methods of social activation and animation of others;

- Project and time management, the ability to name and describe their successes, achievements and acquired competencies;
- Expand the ability to develop and conduct their own classes and promote topics such as tolerance, openness towards other people, the idea of "less waste" and ways of ecological behavior in everyday life;
- Development of social competencies, increase in the ability to work in a group and in an international team, and to function and cooperate with the local community;
- Knowledge of the Polish language, culture of the country and the region - especially the Podlasie region;
- Development of communicative competence, communication in foreign languages;
- Growth of entrepreneurship and initiative through implementation of own ideas and projects;
- Opportunities to increase their awareness of global and social challenges and their own role in the environment and their own impact on the environment;
- Knowledge regarding the functioning of NGOs in Poland, project and organization management, cooperation with the local community;
- Development of skills in working with children and youth, activating and animating others, public relations, critical thinking, creating their own activities and materials for activities, etc.

Volunteers will develop their attitudes, such as openness, respect, understanding, tolerance for people of other nationalities and people from different backgrounds, recognition of difference and responsibility for the environment. Volunteers will develop their intercultural, civic, social communication, and entrepreneurial and independence competencies.

☐ **Previous volunteer experience:**

Last year we hosted Bakar from Georgia. He has been very active in supporting many activities. From the beginning of his stay in Michałowo, he became a well-known person to most residents. He was involved in activities like:

- Office assistance in creating posters and video editing.
- Collecting materials (videos and pictures) about different initiatives in the region.
- Presenting Georgian culture and traditions in kindergarten and primary school.
- Leading creative activities in kindergarten and daycare center for disabled adults.
- Supporting charity events.
- Supporting local football club for kids
- Leading English conversation club for adults.



- Participation in creating his own theater performance.
- Promoting volunteering during local events.
- Leading animation for kids during local festivals.
- Leading activities for kids during winter holidays.
- Helping with ordering clothes and materials for refugees.
- Assistance in preparing and leading group volunteering and ecological camp.



If you want to know a little more about our school, what we do, our previous volunteers, visit our facebook: [Wolontariusze w Michałowie | Facebook](#) or our website: [Stowarzyszenie Międzynarodowej i Międzykulturowej Wymiany ANAWOJ | Michałowo | Facebook](#)