



Terms & Conditions 2025

Volunteering & Internship Program

1. Introduction: Purpose & Scope

Welcome to **Volunteers Initiative Nepal (ViN)**. We are a non-governmental, not-for-profit, secular organization dedicated to empowering marginalized communities across Nepal through **education, healthcare, environmental conservation, economic development, and the provision of basic infrastructure**. ViN implements a holistic approach of community empowerment through women's empowerment, youth empowerment, Children's development, public health and medical care, environmental conservation, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable livelihood programs.

ViN hosts a range of structured volunteering and internship programs that provide individuals and groups with transformative, cross-cultural experiences while contributing meaningfully to grassroots development.

These **Terms and Conditions** form a binding agreement between **you** (the volunteer/intern) and **ViN**. They outline your rights, responsibilities, and the organization's expectations throughout your participation. By joining any ViN program, you confirm that you have read, understood, and agree to be bound by these terms.

Who These Terms Apply To

These Terms apply to all forms of participation, including:

- **Short-Term Volunteering** (up to 4 weeks)
- **Mid-Term Volunteering** (5 to 12 weeks)
- **Long-Term Volunteering & Internships** (13 weeks to 10 months)
- **European Solidarity Corps (ESC)**
- **International Workcamps**
- **Group Volunteering**
- **Family Volunteering**

While specific logistical arrangements (**such as accommodation, meals, or fees**) may vary depending on your particular program, **core policies—relating to health and safety, code of conduct, communication, privacy, and ethics—apply equally to all participants.**

These terms are designed to:

- Ensure the safety and dignity of all parties,
- Protect host communities,
- Promote cultural respect and mutual accountability.
- Promote the concept of **decolonized international volunteering services.**

2. Definitions

To ensure clarity throughout this document:

- **“You” / “Your”:** Refers to the individual, group, or family volunteering or interning with ViN. Participants must be at least 18 years old. Minors aged 16–17 may be accepted with prior written consent from their parents or guardians.
 - **“ViN” / “We” / “Us” / “Our”:** Refers to **Volunteers Initiative Nepal**, a registered non-governmental organization in Nepal.
 - **“Partner Organization”:** Authorized sending organizations based abroad that coordinate placements with ViN.
 - **“Placement”:** Refers to your assigned volunteer or internship project organized and facilitated by ViN.
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3. Application & Selection Process

We welcome applications from compassionate and committed individuals who are ready to contribute meaningfully to Nepali communities.

A. Direct Application to ViN

If no partner organization represents your country or region, you may apply directly to ViN by:

- Completing the [online application](#) form or submitting the downloadable form via email.
- Providing a current **CV or résumé**, including **two references** (professional or personal).
- Submit a **copy of your passport**.

Upon receiving your application, ViN will review it and notify you of acceptance via email.

B. Application via Partner Organization

ViN collaborates with partner organizations in several countries. **If you apply through a partner:**

- You will complete their application process and pay their administrative or placement fees.
- The partner will coordinate directly with ViN on your behalf.

Example: If you are based in France and your national organization is affiliated with ALLIANCE or CCIVS, your application and fees will be processed by them, and they will communicate with ViN to confirm your placement.

C. Additional Requirements

To ensure a safe and ethical volunteer experience, ViN may request:

- A **medical fitness declaration** or health check from a licensed physician.
- A **police or criminal background check** from your home country.

ViN reserves the right to conduct further background verifications if necessary.

D. Acceptance and Commitment

Once your application is approved:

- You will receive a **formal acceptance notification** and access to pre-departure resources.
- You agree to conduct yourself by **ViN's mission, values, and these Terms & Conditions** at all times before, during, and after your placement.

4. Fees, Payments & Refunds

Volunteers and interns contribute through a combination of booking and program fees, which support administrative costs, pre-departure and on-site support, orientation, accommodation, meals, and local coordination.

A. Booking Fee

- If you apply **directly through ViN**, a **non-refundable booking fee of EUR 150 (USD 180)** is required upon acceptance.
This fee includes:
 - Administrative processing
 - Personalized support
 - Pre-departure orientation and guidance
- If you apply **through a partner organization (sending organization)**:
 - You will pay their applicable **registration/booking fee**, which replaces ViN's booking fee.
 - **Additionally, a EUR 100 pre-departure support fee must be paid directly to ViN** to cover its preparation, coordination, and communication before your arrival.

B. Program Fees

Program fees vary depending on:

- Project type and duration
- Placement location (e.g., urban vs. rural)
- Services included (e.g., accommodation, meals, training, supervision)

Payment Terms:

- **Fifty percent of the program fee** is payable upon receipt of your Placement Information Sheet.
- **The remaining 50%** must be paid **in person upon arrival at ViN's Kathmandu office**.

C. Additional Charges

Certain services or placement types may require additional fees:

- **Multiple Project Placements:** EUR 100 (USD 120) administrative surcharge
- **Extension beyond 4 weeks:**
 - Volunteers: EUR 95 (USD 115)/week
 - Interns: EUR 105 (USD 125)/week
- **Remote Placements** (e.g., Okhaldhunga ~250 km from Kathmandu):
 - Participants must cover their transportation costs (approx. EUR 200 round trip)
- **Special Project Fees:** Additional EUR 100 (USD 120) may apply to placements in:
 - Medical or Public Health
 - Elderly Care or Disability Support
 - Monasteries or Religious Institutions
 - Construction or Infrastructure projects

For a complete breakdown of fees, please visit:

<https://www.volunteersinitiativenepal.org/affordable-volunteer-program-fees/>

D. Program Fee Refund Policy

ViN recognizes that travel plans can change unexpectedly. The following refund policy applies to all direct and partner applicants:

A. Standard Cancellation Refunds

- **Cancellations made 4 weeks or more** before the start date:
 - **75%** of the total program fee will be refunded.
 - ViN retains **25%** as a non-refundable administrative charge.
- **Cancellations made less than 4 weeks** before the start date:
 - **50%** of the total program fee will be refunded.
 - ViN retains the remaining 50%.
- **No refunds** will be issued once the placement has begun, regardless of the reason.

B. Exceptions

- In cases of **serious illness or injury** before arrival in Nepal, with an official medical certificate, ViN may refund up to **50%** of the program fee.
- If the volunteer must leave due to a **medical emergency or the death of an immediate family member (Parents, spouse, children)**, ViN may:
 - Place your balance **on credit for up to 12 months**, allowing you to resume your project at a later time.

C. Other Financial Responsibilities

- You are responsible for **bank transfer fees, PayPal charges (5.5%)**, and other applicable transaction costs.
- Program fees do **not cover** travel insurance, weekend excursions, SIM cards, or personal entertainment.
- We accept the following currencies: EUR, USD, CAD, GBP, AUD.

Example: If you cancel your project two weeks before departure due to a change in travel plans, you will be eligible for a 50% refund.

5. Placement Assignments & Flexibility

A. Matching Process

ViN assigns placements based on:

- Community needs,
- Your preferences, experience, and skills,
- Availability and seasonal/project-specific demands.

While we strive to honor your preferences, exact placement assignments cannot be guaranteed.

B. Flexibility Clause

You agree to remain flexible and understand that:

- Projects or locations may be subject to change due to unforeseen events (**e.g., weather, local strikes, public holidays, school closures**).
- ViN may reassign you to a similar or alternative placement if required.

C. Program Change Policy

- If ViN is unable to offer **any** of your preferred/alternative project options, a complete program fee refund will be issued.
- If ViN offers one of your selected options and you **decline**, no refund will be provided.

Example: You applied to teach English in Kathmandu, but the local school is closed due to a strike. ViN may reassign you to a community learning center in a nearby village.

6. Accommodation & Food

A. Accommodation Arrangements

ViN provides accommodation as part of the program fee. Options may include:

- Local **homestays with Nepali families**,
- Shared **volunteer houses**,
- **Hostels**, or
- **Monastery accommodations**, depending on project type and location.

Accommodation before or after official program dates incurs **additional charges**.

B. Accommodation Standards

All ViN-approved housing:

- Meets local hygiene and safety standards.
- It is **basic but clean**, culturally appropriate, and shared with other volunteers.
- Offers access to **shared bathrooms and toilets**.

Volunteers are expected to maintain a **clean and respectful** living area at all times.

C. Opting Out of ViN Accommodation

You may request to stay outside ViN-managed housing. In this case:

- ViN may help with referrals, but **you are solely responsible** for the cost and arrangements.
- ViN **will not reimburse** alternative accommodation or food expenses if you choose to leave the assigned placement.

D. Personal Time & Absences

- If you travel or leave your assigned accommodation (e.g., for weekend trips), ViN is not responsible for providing alternative housing or compensation during that period.
- Volunteers staying **longer than one month** may request up to **2 days of personal leave per month**, with **prior written approval**.

E. Meals Provided

- ViN provides **three traditional Nepali meals per day** (e.g., dal bhat, seasonal vegetables, pickles, and tea).
- Meals are home-cooked and culturally authentic.

F. Special Dietary Needs

- If you have **dietary restrictions** (e.g., vegetarian, gluten-free), please notify ViN **in advance**.
- While we do our best to accommodate, options may be limited in rural areas.

Example: A vegetarian volunteer placed in Okhaldhunga will be served lentils, rice, and seasonal vegetables — but may not have access to tofu or other meat alternatives commonly found in Western countries.

7. Training & Induction

All volunteers and interns are required to attend a **mandatory on-arrival orientation**, which lasts **2 to 7 days**, depending on the program type.

The induction includes:

- Introduction to the **need for volunteering, ViN's mission, vision, and community work**.
- A brief course in **basic Nepali language** and local customs.
- Overview of **health, safety, and emergency protocols**.
- Site visit or **half-day sightseeing tour** of Kathmandu (entrance fees not included).
- Detailed **project-specific orientation** and schedule planning with staff.

This session helps you understand cultural sensitivities and expectations before entering the field of work.

Example: You may learn how to respectfully greet your host family (“**Namaste**” with joined palms) and why it’s inappropriate to pass items with your left hand in rural villages.

8. Travel Arrangements & Insurance

A. International Travel

You are responsible for arranging and paying for:

- Your **round-trip international flights** to and from **Kathmandu, Nepal**.
- Any **domestic travel** undertaken during free time or personal excursions.

B. Airport Transfers

- ViN provides **free airport pick-up** upon arrival.
- Departure drop-off is available for approximately. **USD 10-20**, depending on the type of vehicle you choose.

C. Visa Requirements

- All volunteers require a visa to enter Nepal (a **tourist visa** can be obtained on arrival at the airport)
- **Tourist Visa fees** (subject to change):
 - 15 days: USD 30
 - 30 days: USD 50
 - 90 days: USD 125
 - Additional days: USD 3/day
- You are responsible for staying compliant with **Nepal’s immigration laws**.

D. Insurance Policy

All participants must obtain **comprehensive travel and medical insurance** that covers:

- Medical emergencies and hospitalization,
- Accidents or injuries,
- Trip cancellation/interruption,
- Baggage loss or theft,

- Political unrest or evacuation.

You must submit **proof of insurance** to ViN before departure.

9. Health, Safety & Emergencies

ViN is committed to ensuring a safe and secure environment for all volunteers, interns, host communities, and project stakeholders. However, as with any travel and service program in a foreign country, risks may exist. Volunteers are expected to act with personal responsibility and precaution at all times.

A. Health & Safety Standards

- ViN conducts regular safety checks at accommodation sites and project locations.
- Basic sanitation and access to first aid are provided, but rural locations may lack advanced medical services.
- Volunteers are expected to follow all safety instructions provided during orientation or by ViN staff.

B. Personal Responsibility

- Use common sense and situational awareness, especially when traveling, handling tools, or participating in construction or outdoor activities.
- Report any safety concerns, illnesses, or injuries **immediately** to ViN staff.

C. Motorcycle Use

- Due to high accident rates in Nepal, ViN **strongly discourages the use of motorbikes** for transport.
- Volunteers are encouraged to use safer ride-sharing alternatives, such as **Pathao** or **InDrive**, for local travel.

D. Illness or Emergency Protocols

- In the event of illness, injury, or medical emergency:
 - Notify ViN staff without delay.

- ViN will assist in accessing medical care, but is not responsible for associated costs unless this has been previously agreed upon.
- If a volunteer must return home due to a medical emergency, ViN will assist with local logistics and coordination.

Example: A volunteer experiencing a high fever in a rural village will be assisted in reaching the nearest health post and then, if necessary, transferred to Kathmandu. The volunteer's insurance will cover costs.

10. Code of Conduct

ViN expects all volunteers and interns to uphold the highest standards of ethical behavior, cultural sensitivity, and professionalism throughout their engagement. The following guidelines apply at all times, including during personal time.

A. Professional Conduct & Work Standards

- Maintain regular attendance, punctuality, and preparedness at your project site.
- Complete assigned tasks to the best of your ability, adhering to the agreed-upon role description.
- Cooperate respectfully with supervisors and local staff.

B. Reporting Obligations

- Promptly report any challenges, conflicts, injuries, or ethical concerns to your ViN supervisor.
- Submit any required progress or final reports, if requested by your program coordinator.

C. Prohibited Activities

- Volunteers are **strictly prohibited** from soliciting or negotiating employment with host organizations or local communities during their placement.
- Engaging in business activities or accepting compensation from local stakeholders constitutes a violation of the terms of this program.

D. Dress Code & Hygiene

- Volunteers must dress modestly and appropriately for Nepali cultural norms:
 - Clothing should **cover the shoulders to the knees** in public and work environments.
 - Avoid tight, transparent, or excessively revealing clothing.

- Maintain personal cleanliness and contribute to the cleanliness of shared living and project spaces.

E. Alcohol, Drugs & Conduct

- The use or possession of **alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited** during working hours, at project sites, or in any ViN-organized activities.
- Volunteers are expected to act responsibly during their free time, as they are still considered representatives of ViN.

F. Pets

- Pets are not allowed in ViN accommodation or during project placements.

G. Disciplinary Action

ViN reserves the right to terminate your placement without refund if your behavior is deemed:

- Harmful to yourself, others, or the host community,
- Culturally insensitive or disruptive,
- In violation of any local law or these Terms and Conditions.

11. Communication, Privacy & Social Media Policy

ViN values transparency, inclusion, and ethical conduct in all forms of communication, both digital and verbal. This policy ensures that interactions among volunteers, staff, and the broader community are respectful, secure, and aligned with the organization's values.

A. Official Communication Channels

- All project-related communication must take place through **ViN-approved platforms**, such as official email threads and designated WhatsApp groups.
- These channels ensure professional coordination, transparency, and emergency access.

B. Group Management

- All volunteer group chats must include **at least two ViN staff members** as administrators.

- Volunteers must **not create or manage separate or secret groups** related to ViN programs without prior written approval.

C. Freedom of Expression

- ViN respects the right to express opinions and engage in healthy discussion.
- However, communication must remain **constructive, non-discriminatory, and culturally respectful**.
- Negative or divisive messaging that targets staff or fellow volunteers is discouraged.

D. Prohibition of Exclusionary Groups

- Forming unofficial groups that **exclude ViN staff** is strictly prohibited, as this may:
 - Undermine safety monitoring,
 - Facilitate misinformation or conflict,
 - Breach ViN's legal duty of care.

E. Emergency & Safety Monitoring

- In the case of medical or security emergencies, **timely staff access** to communication groups is essential.
- Unauthorized or hidden groups can hinder ViN's ability to respond effectively, increasing legal risk and jeopardizing participant safety.

F. Data Privacy

- All volunteers must comply with Nepal's **Privacy Act 2018** and international data regulations (e.g., **GDPR**).
- You may not share, store, or distribute personal information (such as names, phone numbers, addresses, or images of local individuals) without **explicit consent**.

G. Media, Logo, and Representation

- You may share ViN's official content from its website and social media platforms.
- You may **not use ViN's logo, name, or materials** for personal blogs, media appearances, or public representation without written permission.
- Any unauthorized public statements claiming to represent ViN are prohibited.

Example: A volunteer may post personal photos from their experience, but cannot claim to be an “official spokesperson” or publish interviews with community members without approval.

H. Respecting Group Dynamics

- Volunteers are expected to include all peers and local staff in communications and social interactions, respecting diverse backgrounds and avoiding exclusion.

I. Organizing Group Activities

- Group events (e.g., treks, tours, dinners) involving other volunteers must receive **prior written approval** from ViN.
- This ensures safety coordination and prevents scheduling conflicts with community commitments.

J. Competing Services

- Volunteers may not organize or promote alternative treks, accommodations, or services that **compete with ViN’s official offerings**, unless specifically authorized to do so.

K. Post-Program Access

- Upon completion or withdrawal from your placement, your access to ViN-managed platforms will be **revoked within two business days**.
- Continued access requires formal approval.

L. Violations and Consequences

Violation of this communication policy may result in:

- Formal warnings,
- Reporting to the partner or sending organizations,
- Immediate program suspension or termination,
- Legal action may be taken under Nepali or international law in severe cases.

12. Respect for Local Laws

All volunteers and interns are required to comply with the laws and regulations of Nepal during their stay and placement.

A. Legal Obligations

- You are required to respect **Nepalese national and local laws** at all times.
- Illegal activities—including drug use, unauthorized employment, or inappropriate behavior—may lead to **immediate dismissal** and **prosecution by local authorities**.

B. Cultural Respect

Volunteers must demonstrate cultural sensitivity, including:

- Respect for local religious practices and traditions,
- Avoidance of public criticism or mockery of cultural values.

Example: Entering a temple without removing shoes or photographing people without permission can be considered disrespectful in specific communities.

13. Grievance Resolution Procedure

ViN is committed to fostering open communication and fair conflict resolution.

A. Step-by-Step Process

1. **Report issues promptly** to your ViN supervisor or field coordinator.
2. If unresolved, you may escalate the concern to **ViN's senior management** in writing.
3. For serious grievances, ViN will conduct an internal review and respond within a reasonable timeframe.

B. Focus on Constructive Feedback

- ViN values constructive criticism but discourages **backbiting, gossip, or negativity** that undermines morale or disrupts team cohesion.
 - Volunteers are encouraged to focus on **positive solutions and mutual understanding**.
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14. Privacy & Data Protection

ViN is committed to protecting your data and respecting your privacy, in line with **Nepal's Privacy Act 2018** and global best practices.

A. Data Collection

ViN collects only the personal data required to:

- Process your application,
- Manage your placement,
- Ensure your safety and program quality.

B. Use of Media

- Unless you **opt out in writing**, ViN may use photos, videos, or excerpts of your volunteer experience for:
 - Awareness campaigns,
 - Reporting to donors,
 - Your profile and projects on ViN's websites and social media outreach.

Example: Your photo during a health awareness event might be featured on ViN's website unless you've explicitly declined such use.

C. Contacting Past Volunteers

- If a prospective volunteer wishes to connect with a past participant, ViN will **only facilitate contact if prior written consent** is obtained from both parties.

15. Disclaimers & Limitations of Liability

ViN endeavors to provide accurate and reliable information; however, some events may fall beyond our control.

A. Unforeseen Disruptions

ViN is **not liable** for program changes, delays, or cancellations caused by:

- Natural disasters,
- Epidemics,
- Political unrest,
- Strikes or transportation disruptions.

B. Personal Risk

Volunteers participate **at their own risk**. ViN is not responsible for:

- Illness, injury, or loss of property,
- Medical emergencies not covered by insurance,
- Travel delays or missed flights.

C. Negligence Clause

ViN is only liable for personal injury or loss if it results from **proven gross negligence** on the part of ViN staff.

16. Program Dates & Extensions

A. Confirmed Dates

- Your program start and end dates are confirmed upon booking.
- **Shortening your stay upon arrival** does not qualify you for a fee reduction or refund.

B. Program Extensions

- Volunteers may request an extension **in writing**, subject to:
 - Availability of placements,
 - Timely payment of additional program fees.
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17. Disciplinary Procedure

ViN uses a structured approach to address breaches of this policy.

A. Three-Step System

1. **Memo 1** – Verbal Warning
2. **Memo 2** – Written Warning
3. **Memo 3** – Termination of Placement

B. Immediate Termination

ViN reserves the right to bypass earlier steps and proceed directly to **dismissal without refund** in cases of:

- Alcohol/drug abuse,
- Sexual misconduct,
- Theft, fraud, or exploitation,
- Physical violence or endangering others,
- Cultural disrespect or violation of local customs/laws.

Example: A volunteer who is found intoxicated during working hours at a monastery placement may be dismissed immediately.

C. Future Exclusion

Volunteers dismissed for misconduct or severe violations will be **permanently barred** from participating in any ViN programs in the future.

18. Legal Compliance and Liability Waiver

By joining ViN, you agree to:

A. Follow the Law

- Obey all relevant Nepali laws, including immigration, health, and safety regulations.

B. Acknowledge Risk

- Participate at your own risk and release ViN from liability for:
 - Accidents,

- Illness,
- Theft,
- Travel disruptions beyond ViN's control.

C. Legal Representation

- ViN does not provide legal assistance or representation.
 - Any legal disputes or issues are the **sole responsibility** of the volunteer.
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19. Declaration & Consent

By submitting your application or signing these Terms & Conditions, you hereby confirm:

- You have **read and understood** the full document.
 - You **agree to abide** by the policies, procedures, and standards described herein.
 - You will uphold the values and mission of **Volunteers Initiative Nepal**, and serve as a respectful and responsible global ambassador throughout your placement.
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 www.volunteersinitiativenepal.org / www.vin.org.np