

## Haabersti Leisure center: Open youth center

### ORGANISATION DESCRIPTION

Tallinn Haabersti Leisure Centre is a municipal organisation which works in local level. As a part of governmental youth policy it has Haabersti Open Youth Centre. Centre is situated in the capital of Estonia – Tallinn. Haabersti Open Youth Centre was established 10 years ago in interests of children and youth for taking active part in social life and processes around, for spending time with friends, getting new skills, developing international relationships through non-formal learning and projects for and with young people. It also has a prevention function to avoid violence, alcoholism and drug addition among youngsters of district Haabersti.

The Centre cooperates with schools, police, local government, other Tallinn youth centres to direct children in to the Centre using its facilities and activities instead of browsing on the streets.

Haabersti Youth Centre is open Monday to Friday 14.00 – 20.00, sometimes there are events on Saturdays. Most of activities are free for the youth. At the moment Centre has two youth workers and one youth worker developing working methods. There are around 50 youths daily in Centre aged 7-22.

The children and the youngsters can study, communicate and play with the other children and youth workers in the centre. There are 2 target groups: children in ages of 7-12 and youth in ages of 13-22. The first one is very active in participation of various kinds of projects like summer camps, town camps, outdoor activity, competitions, concerts, prevention projects, tournaments, excursions etc.

Our organisation also works on raising the awareness through international non-formal learning by using Europe Youth programmes. We have experience in youth exchanges as a hosting and a sending organisation. One method of inter cultural learning and youngsters personal growth in our youth exchanges is outdoor experiential learning. Centre receives most of materials and funds for its work from the Municipality of Haabersti and different projects.

### Project context

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The Centre is located in district with a normal economical and social background. However, there are also families with economical and social difficulties (single mothers with kids, families in low material level, families with many children, etc).

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Our organisation also aims at improving work with the second target group by getting awareness through international non-formal learning by using Europe Youth programmes. We have experience in youth exchanges as a hosting and a sending organisation. As a one using method of intercultural learning and youngsters personal growing in our youth exchanges is outdoor experiential learning. Centre receives most of materials and finances for its work from the Municipality of Haabersti as well as from different projects. There are half of Russian and half of Estonian speaking children in the Centre.

Talking about facilities, there are 2 halls at the first and at the second floor, a kitchen, hall for the table games and for communication, TV, karaoke, 5 computers, art-room and room with pool, corona, table football, table tennis, Wii, air-hockey. Also there are 2 rooms for youth workers, developing youth worker and project manager.

Centre is situated in the capital of Estonia – Tallinn. Tallinn has population about 400 000 people. Centre is located in district Haabersti in 25min (by public transport) from the Centre of Tallinn. In district Haabersti there are 8 schools (4 for Estonian- and 4 for Russian-speaking children), 8 kindergartens, a post office, a library, many shops, cafes, pubs, indoor swimming pool, shopping centre, 3 stadiums, polyclinic, a very good public transport connection with all districts of Tallinn, sport clubs, Ice-hall etc.

There is a pond and a small lake Harku in Haabersti. The district Haabersti situated at the seashore and has its own 2 beaches.

Haabersti district has population of around 40 000 people and approximately 8 000 of Haabersti population are children and youngsters in age 7-19.

## **Proposed Activities**

Haabersti Youth Centre decided to invite a volunteer for making changes in its daily work, for bringing new ideas, fresh approaches and different understanding of simple things. For the tutors it will be a good opportunity to stretch their comfort zone and to become more open-minded in the intercultural learning. Also it will be good practise of English for the staff members and youngsters. There are 2 target groups in Haabersti Youth Centre: children in age of 7-12 and youth in age of 13-22. European Integration has become more and more important for Estonian youth. Through the application of European volunteers programme to our organization we are going to achieve the following aims:

young people should develop a better understanding about other countries and cultures,  
youth should have an instance, which shows how the European Integration goes through  
young people should learn to understand that they are EU citizens

we are also interested in planning some activities like youth exchange or youth initiatives

The Centre will give opportunity for the volunteer to create and realise his/her ideas: a place, children and the youth, needed materials, support from the tutors, tutors experience, knowledge and skills.

Also it will be a great opportunity for the volunteer to get know Estonian country and culture as the Centre is organising outings and excursions for the children and it is possible to involve volunteer to this as well. There is also a possibility for the volunteer to develop his/her skills and personality through different kind of activities, what are offer Youth Centre. Volunteer will get opportunity of developing independence and self-confidence, learning about youth work and youth worker competencies, conflict management, team-work, group-dynamic, decision making, communication etc. There is also educational value for volunteer through experiencing social, pedagogical and youth work being a part of different kind of projects and activities in Haabersti Youth Centre.

Haabersti Youth Centre would like to have a volunteer who should be involved in the daily work. He/ she should support the staff members, communicate with the children and youth, occasionally cook with them (traditional meals from the home country), take care for them and support the staff members to organize some different events like camps during the holidays, workshops, celebrating different dates of folk calendar and other events and projects for/ with young people. The volunteer will have some different tasks, for example:

helping children with foreign language studies

communicate and support the young people, being available for questions and problems

arranging outings, excursions, exhibitions, lead camps for children, work camps for youngsters, etc.

taking care of youth (support daily in home work, playing with children, direct in youth initiative projects)

assisting the staff members at their daily works

informing the youth about his/her native country (traditions, culture, music, etc);

helping to prepare different culture events, developing intercultural learning projects;

organise and manage different projects for children / youth (educational, thematic, sport / cultural, etc)

organise youth information, events about Youth in Action programme and EVS programme

In summer time our Youth Centre organizes youth camps for youngsters 15-17 years old, where the main task is to introduce to young people opportunities of international activities and as a result to create projects of youth exchange or to promote developing of youth participation in Youth in Action programmes and youth awareness of opportunities for youngsters in Europe dimension. So we are interested in volunteer as a person who will be sharing his/her own experience in EVS programme and increasing understanding of intercultural learning and tolerance among the youngsters.

In summer 2007 we realized youth exchange for youngsters in ages 16-20 "City youth in the Island". Our partner was Youth Centre from Finland. For the first experience it was very successful result. International youth exchange took place in Estonia, Vormsi Island. In December 2008 we organized youth exchange at Finland with the same partner. We are looking for volunteer who will be interested to be involved in similar programmes of Youth in Action. We are interested that the volunteer will be helping us in managing and organising such youth exchanges. At the moment we have 2 groups of youngsters more who are very active and would like to be involved in projects at international level. With those 2 groups we started planning actions of youth exchanges. Volunteer can be involved in these processes too.

### **Profile of Volunteer and Recruitment Process**

The most important is that the volunteer wants to work with children and youth. Previous experience is not necessary but could help. Volunteer is expected to be flexible, tolerant, open-minded, friendly, with positive attitude, helpful and creative person. He/she has to be active and take initiatives and responsibilities.

Volunteers are asked to fill in an application form, which will be the base of the selection. A telephone interview is foreseen as well. Staff of the project chooses the volunteer, whose profile and interests match the best with the activities of the project.

### **Risk Prevention, Protection and Safety**

The host organization will ensure:

- 1) that the volunteer work is safe and been assessed for risk
- 2) that every effort is made that project meets high health and safety standards
- 3) that the volunteer is trained and familiar with the volunteering work and have access to adequate safety equipment if needed
- 4) that the volunteer will get all the practical and psychological support from the staff