

Estonian Food Bank

The Estonian Food Bank is a charity organisation, distributing food to people living in poverty and can only work with the help of volunteers.

In Estonia there are 11 Food Banks. The Tallinn Food Bank operates as an umbrella organisation for all Food Banks. The Food Bank collects food, controls it and distributes it weekly to 1700 families living in poverty. The Tallinn Food Bank cooperates with 45 charity organisations in Harju and Rapla county.

The Tallinn Food Bank has one manager, two warehouse managers, one bus driver, one communication manager and a bookkeeper. In addition to employed staff, there are local volunteers who are engaged on regular basis.



Project environment:

The service will take place in Tallinn, which is the capital and biggest city in Estonia.

- The project increases young people's positive awareness of other cultures - the volunteers will learn about Estonia's recent history, social problems, poverty and waste of food
- The project supports dialogue and intercultural encounters with other young people from different backgrounds and cultures - the volunteer will meet other Estonian volunteers. Often also groups of foreigners visit the Food Bank to get information or to help with packing the food. The volunteer can also meet with the Food Bank's partner NGOs in Harju and Rapla county (around 45 NGOs) and with the other 11 Food Banks all over Estonia.
- The project helps to prevent and combat prejudice, racism and all attitudes leading to exclusion – the Food Bank helps people living in poverty in Estonia. We fight poverty, hunger and exclusion. Our priority is always families living in poverty, especially families with many children and families with small children. All people who belong to these group can get help. Food is distributed for free.
- The project develops sense of tolerance and understanding of diversity - our aim is to fight exclusion and to get more attention for people living in poverty.

Proposed activities for volunteers:

The volunteer should be flexible and willing and able to do different kind of things: help with transport of boxes of food, packing and selecting the food, distribution of food, cleaning of warehouse, do some simple administrative tasks, help with instructing new volunteers (often we have different types of groups of volunteers) and help with organizing food drives and special campaigns. If the volunteer wants and is able, he can drive our van, give English language courses to our every week volunteers, prepare lunch for the volunteers and give lectures in schools about poverty, waste of food and the foodbank. The main help needed, however, is transportation and packaging of food boxes which is physically very challenging. We also have 40 partner NGOs in Harju county (working with families, children, elderly, handicapped, homeless) where the volunteer could work half a day per week if wanted. If wanted, volunteer can sometimes also work a week in one of the other 10 Food Banks all over Estonia.

The volunteer will learn about logistics, data collecting for warehouses, food safety, working with volunteers (every day we have 5-20 volunteers) and about charity, poverty and waste of food in Estonia.

A few times per year the Food Bank organises courses, trainings, excursions and meetings for our volunteers who come weekly. We can organize a monthly or quarterly meeting with the Food Bank's general manager and warehouse manager to assess the volunteers learning experience.

The working hours will be from Monday until Friday from 9.00 until 16.00. If volunteers exceptionally has to work during the weekend, he will have the same amount of day off during the working week. The Food Bank can offer a bicycle.



Volunteer profiles and recruitment process:

Volunteer should be in a normal physical condition. The volunteer should help with transport, packing and do simple administrative tasks (fill in forms about collected and distributed food). If the volunteer wants and is able, he can drive our van, give English language courses to our every week volunteers, prepare lunch for the volunteers and give lectures in schools about poverty, waste of food and the Food Bank. It would be an advantage if the volunteer could work with computer, speaks good English and has a driving license.

The project is open to everybody who is positive, friendly, honest and punctual and most of all has the desire to help people in need. Volunteers don't need to have previous working experience. Most important is that they are willing to work with people and also at the warehouse of the Food Bank.

All the volunteers who contact with coordinating organisation International Youth Association EstYES will be informed about the vacant of the project for certain deadline. Volunteer will get special application form to fill in, which is the basis for the pre-selection. Then host project receives applications approved by EstYES to make their final decision. Staff of the host project chooses the volunteer, whose profile and interests match the best the proposed activities of the project.

The host organisation will provide the volunteer with a tutor throughout the project. Tutor's responsibility is monitoring volunteer's daily duties and deal with task-related issues and questions that may appear during volunteer's service period. Volunteer and tutor discuss together possible activities and compose a working schedule. Apart from providing a tutor, the coordinating organisation EstYES provides volunteer a mentor who will give personal support to the volunteer during their service period.

Sending, coordinating and host organisation are working together to provide help and support for the volunteer and to make sure the project is successful.