



**International
Voluntary
Service**



A Joint Newsletter from IVS and VAP - December 2024

IVS and VAP have similar objectives working for peace and international understanding through voluntary work and particularly workcamps. This joint newsletter has been produced in recognition of that.

IVS Memories book Webinar Sunday 1st December 5pm to 6.30pm UK time

In the run up to International Volunteering Day on 5th December join us on a webinar for a chance to hear from IVS volunteers who contributed written reflections for the '**90 years and counting**' publication.



Hosted by Rosemary Hobday, Helen Watts and Paul Barrow (on technical)

We will have readings from 5 or 6 contributors, with some questions and dialogue with our hosts using Chat.

Information will be shared about how to access copies of the publication and learn more about IVS.

We look forward to welcoming you online very soon

To Join this Webinar Zoom Meeting please ctrl+click on this link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85367598995?pwd=4iRWFHPvZvF1qzLhUKc3jvq4e0kxqe.1>

Meeting ID: 853 6759 8995

Passcode: 898166

"IVS : 90 years and counting Volunteers' Reflections" is a selection of Memories, seventeen in total, from our Memories Project. Having so far collected over fifty stories the booklet focuses on the period after the previous IVS for Peace publication: post 1949 to present day.

The 17 memories are a range of experiences - short, long, local, international volunteering examples and those that included a reflective element. We hope we have achieved this and the readers both enjoy and become inspired to support IVS going forward, whether as a volunteer, donor or member.

The **link to the webinar** is also available on the IVS web site www.ivs.gb.org

Copies of the booklet can be ordered for £6 including p&p (£8 if to be mailed abroad) <https://ivs.gb.org/shop/> or by sending a cheque to the IVS Office, Thorn House, 5 Rose Street, Edinburgh EH2 2PR

Thank you everyone for contributing your memories and sharing your reflections on your experience with IVS and SCI. We are still collecting new memories, recent or older. Please send to memories@ivs.gb.org







IVS and VAP Projects to volunteer on

IVS has access through SCI to Short Term Volunteer projects: Between now and 1 April 2025 these include:

Europe: Estonia 1 [Winter Vikings Village], Seeds Iceland; Asia:- Hong Kong 1, Japan 2, Palestine 1 [Christmas in Palestine], Thailand 1; Africa: – Botswana 2, Kenya 1 Nigeria 1, Senegal 1, South Africa 2; Australia 1,

Through SCI, IVS is advertising twelve projects in several parts of Britain which are able to host longer term volunteers.

Look up the short and long term project opportunities at <https://ivs.gb.org/service-civil-international/>

	
	
<p>Christmas in Palestine, PS-IPY 12.4, 22 Dec'24 – 2 Jan'25</p> 	

The VAP short term volunteer database has additional short term projects in Kenya, Hong Kong , India , Nepal8, Mexico ,

Also 5 medium term projects up to six months in Colombia , South Africa , Taiwan , Thailand and three longer term projects

Look them up at <https://www.vap.org.uk/>



Merger of IVS and VAP

Following the agreement of IVS to merge made at the IVS AGM in June, the VAP Special General Meeting on 3 October agreed to authorise the closure of Volunteer Action for Peace which will become a department of International Voluntary Service GB. This was confirmed at a subsequent meeting.

The Charity Commission has been consulted on the proposed merger and a response is awaited.

Membership Subscriptions

As part of the merger of IVS and VAP, members of VAP are encouraged to pay their membership fees into an on-going IVS bank account. This can be done on-line, visit <https://ivsgb.org/join/> Alternatively payments may be made by cheque which is posted to the IVS office at Thorn House, 5 Rose Street, EDINBURGH EH2 2PR.

Annual Membership fees for the merged organisation are £30 standard rate and £15 for persons who are students, unwaged or on a low income. Membership is valid for 12 months from the date of payment.

IVS international workcamp at The Mount Camphill Co-housing Community in East Sussex, August 2024



We enjoyed another IVS Camp cohort in August. This year's project focused on painting outdoor spaces and a little bit of indoor painting and land work. As always, we were blown away by the instant connections that our international group made with us. They tuned into our life and community building and brought new experiences to us all. We made time to show them the local area and shared a cultural evening together. Our thanks to IVS, their work will live on and our work taken out into the world.....Japan, Mexico, Spain, Portugal and Greece.

International Volunteer statistics 2024

VAP collaborates with the Alliance Network of like minded organisations in other countries to receive and send volunteers on projects of community value.

International Voluntary Service is a member of Service Civil International and collaborates with a largely different set of like minded organisations in other countries. The organisations SEEDS, in Iceland, is one of a few organisations abroad whose projects are on both the VAP and IVS lists.

International volunteering is slowly recovering from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic when in 2020 and 2021 there were severe restrictions on international travel. The VAP Geneal Meeting in September 2024 was provided with volunteer statistics for the 2023-24 period:

- There were 8 'outgoing' short term volunteers through VAP with destinations of Iceland, Germany, and 2 in GB itself.
- There were 25 'Incoming' short and medium term volunteers through VAP attending projects in Britain. 19 of these volunteers were resident in European countries, 4 came from Asian countries (South Korea and Vietnam) and 2 from the Americas (Mexico)
- There were 3 incoming long term volunteers who came from France under their Service Civique programme. They were based at the Othona Community project in Bradwell-on-Sea, Essex.
- The 3 Long Term Volunteers and a few of the short term volunteers needed Certificates of Sponsorship from IVS in order to obtain visas to enter UK to attend VAP projects.
- IVS sent out 17 short term volunteers and received 22 short term volunteers in 2024.
- IVS sent 2 long term volunteers to a project in Cambodia. IVS provided 16 Certificates of Sponsorship for volunteers coming to IVS (largely longer term) projects in Britain. A number of other volunteers from the SCI network obtained Certificates of Sponsorship directly through the IVS project host.

Going forward, the merged organisation will continue to offer volunteering opportunities through the Alliance Network with which VAP has been involved and also through the SCI Network with which IVS is involved. Of note, since SCI improved its LTV database there have been more applications to be placed with IVS's project hosts.

Members of the IVS Board of Directors

The IVS Board is now:

Richard Williams (Chair)	Paul Winter (Vice-Chair)
Nigel Watt	Rosemary Hobday
Gheorghe Zugravu	Tim Marc
Kerry Hardagon	Mohammad Rashid

SCI International Committee Meeting – ICM

The 88th ICM of SCI will be held at Penang , Malaysia organised by SCI-Malaysia from 5th-8th of December 2024.

Mohammad Rashid-Trustee and Board Member of IVS-Great Britain will be the official delegate of IVS-GB at this ICM . About 58 delegates and observers (in person and on line) will be participating in this ICM.

Main theme of this year's ICM will be to consolidate the work SCI already doing in the changing world of 21st century.

There will be number of resolutions to be debated, voted on and implemented including:

1. Strengthening SCI Regional Working Group.
2. Role of SCI in ICAN (stop nuclear weapons) and NMW (Anti-militarism).
3. Lost International Delegates (better prepared and informed delegates in ICM/EPM)
4. Financing SCI activities in changing funding Environment (Financial Spring Cleaning).
5. Governance of SCI including several changes in part of SCI Constitution.
6. SCI Solidarity Funds
7. Peace Activism Project Campaign
8. Declining volunteer numbers including expertise from former/returned volunteers and supporters.
9. Impact assessment of volunteering
10. Role of Socia Media and warmongering
11. Solidarity within the SCI movement
12. Situation in Israel and Palestine and standing of SCI

Full details can be found in the Members Area of SCI international Secretariat(IS) website. If you anyone has any questions and observation please get in touch with Rashid on 07966 005313 or email him at: mohammadrashid057@btinternet.com

By Sunday 1st December 2024.

SCI's Exchange Platform Meeting (EPM) 2024

This October, SCI branches, partners, and contacts had the opportunity to meet in person in Vienna for the annual Exchange Platform Meeting. IVS was represented by our Programme Manager Nuno Doria.

This year's meeting was graciously hosted by SCI Austria who did a terrific job even if with a very small team of activists. The theme this year was "Youth, Volunteering, and Resilience: Fostering Peace through Community Engagement," with most sessions focusing on these topics. 36 participants from 22 countries spent a week together, exchanging ideas, discussing, preparing proposals, and voting. There was also time to explore the city, celebrate birthdays, and enjoy a wide variety of potato dishes at the canteen!

The week officially opened on Tuesday with sessions on youth participation, during which we explored how to better engage younger generations by understanding their needs, challenges, and motivations, as well as a session on the impact assessment results and recommendations. That day, we had the opportunity to split into groups, go outside, and discuss how we confront challenges in our organizations.

On the second day, we addressed various topics, including better practices for international volunteering exchanges and ways to improve collaboration for our projects. We also had an inspiring session by the Climate team on the connection between Peace and Climate.

On day three, we engaged in a critical discussion on the decolonization of international volunteering and had the privilege of meeting Corinna from WeltWegWeiser to discuss quality standards for sending and hosting organizations.

Day four was particularly active; we began the day by discussing all aspects of SCI's working groups, including their past, present, and future.

IVS was represented by our Board member Kerry Hargadon at the Africa Working Group meeting and Nuno chaired the Abya Yala Working Group meeting which has now officially submitted a request for recognition as an official working group of SCI in the coming ICM in Malaysia.

We also received presentations on the pool of expertise initiative, the FLOW project, the Climate team and Climate manifesto, and we had the opportunity to prepare proposals for changes in our movement.

The final day started with an insightful workshop facilitated by SCI Switzerland on Peace Activism and Pacifism, followed by discussions and a vote on participants' proposals that will bring about change in our movement!



It was wonderful to see such a diverse group of people coming together for this exchange. Familiar faces mingled with many newcomers to EPM, all excited to share their experiences, build connections and inspire change!

How you can help IVS

Volunteer

IVS is mostly run by volunteers. The Joint Chairs of IVS, the rest of IVS's Board of Trustees, and the Fundraising and Newsletter Group, are volunteers. If you'd like to volunteer with us, do get in touch. We are looking for:

- an extra person to sit on the IVS Board as a Trustee

- a bookkeeper to manage the receipts, payments and bank accounts
- an extra person for our Finance Advisory Group, or to serve as Assistant Treasurer
- a couple of people to assist IVS with its publicity and recruitment efforts.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities please write to director@ivs.gb.org

Recent volunteers on projects

We would particularly like to hear from recent volunteers about their experiences, impressions and views on how IVS can establish a digital presence on social media. If you can help here please write to info@ivs.gb.org

Donate

IVS relies on donations to run its activities. A donation would help us to recruit, train, support and send volunteers overseas to support our work. It would also enable many more volunteers from overseas to come to Great Britain to support local charities to deliver hundreds of important services to those most in need. For instance, the UK government charges IVS £25 for each invitation we issue to a long-term volunteer as well as seeking some £1000 in NHS fees from that volunteer. Further information is on our website <https://ivs.gb.org/donate-2>

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