

# IVS MESSENGER

International Voluntary Service Quarterly Newsletter



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## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Brought to you by Bettie van Straaten

Our aim has always been to promote peace and social justice worldwide, and thanks to your generous support last year, we are proud to say that we have made huge strides in the right direction. In the 89 long years that we've been operating, our values have remained unchanged. Our methods, on the other hand, are constantly developing.

We've had the immense privilege this year to work with some fantastic volunteers, from home and abroad, as well as receiving much needed donations from our members that keep us functioning. We've also recruited new staff and interns to help us take IVS forward and help us become more sustainable for the future.

**May 2020 be a year full of love and peace!**

We are excited to participate in The Gathering next week along with 1700+ delegates. The team will be there to hear and see the latest in our sector, network and also promote the unique message of

peace through volunteering. We particularly want to promote the focus on Youth that the IVSGB board agreed recently as part of a strategy to encourage younger potential volunteers to become involved and stay involved as lifelong volunteers. The Gathering is characterised by many networking opportunities but also heaps of information sharing, and the team will be bringing as much as possible to practically apply for IVS.

scvo  
the  
**Gathering**  
**2020**

19 & 20 February | SEC, Glasgow

**Book your stand now!**

# Meet the team

## Laura-Marisa Ngangom, Programme Manager

You already know Laura-Marisa, she comes from Strasbourg, France. She started as a Placement Officer as an EVS Volunteer (The Erasmus+/European Commission funded programme) to promote volunteering abroad (UK to overseas and vice versa) as well as core values such as solidarity, tolerance, European citizenship and mutual understanding among young people. She is now IVS' Programme Manager and as a former volunteer herself, she really enjoys helping volunteers have a fun and valuable experience.



## Filippo Parisi, Placement Officer

He was born in Bari (Italy) and joined IVS recently through the European Voluntary Service. He was formerly employed in a job centre in his native city. He was so intrigued by IVS that he decided to move to Edinburgh to join the team. He is a keen writer, so in his spare time he writes short stories and last year he published his first book.



## Alisha Malik, Marketing, Events and Social Media Officer

She studied her degree in Events Management at Queen Margaret University. She is responsible for the marketing, social media and recruitment events for IVS. She is passionate about volunteering and glad to be working for an organisation making a positive change. She enjoys travelling to different countries and learning about new cultures. In her spare time, she enjoys walking her dog by the coast.



## Thea Vermeulen, Marketing Consultant

She is an organised and creative professional with proven marketing skills, possessing ten years of experience working for a diverse group of organisations and clients with international presence. She has expertise in campaign and product launch marketing, publication marketing, online-based advertising and social media. She believes in IVS' cause and wants to support the volunteering activities.



## Natalie Johnstone, Finance & Operations

She caught the IVS bug more than 25 years ago and would not be the same person today without the life-enhancing experiences she has had with IVS. She has had the opportunity to participate in many international IVS/SCI workcamps throughout her twenties and thirties. She is now currently volunteering as a Finance Officer at the IVS head office in Edinburgh.



Are you following us?!?!?





# The Global Standard for Volunteering for Development

Over a billion people across the world volunteer each year. Volunteers make a vital contribution to the development progress all over the globe. Their efforts must be properly supported to make sure their hard work and energy is harnessed in the most positive way. Creating a new Global Standard for Volunteering for Development will help ensure that their work is as responsible, effective and impactful as it can be.



VSO and the International Forum for Volunteering in Development were delighted to launch the Global Standard at the International Volunteer Cooperation Organisations' Conference in Kigali, Rwanda in October 2019. The Standard was developed and produced by VSO on behalf of the Forum to ensure that volunteering is both responsible and impactful. [Read more...](#)

## COP 26: Glasgow Climate Change Conference 2020

Cop 26 will be taking place in Glasgow from Monday, 9 November 2020 – Thursday, 19 November 2020 and has everyone talking.

[Click here](#) for more information and happenings.



**16** PEACE AND JUSTICE  
STRONG INSTITUTIONS



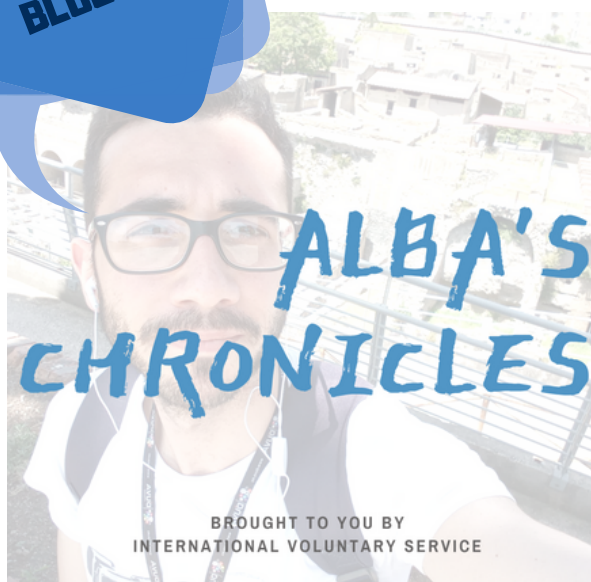
Our work strongly aligns with the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Together we can make a difference. [Click here](#) for more information.



Peace between countries must rest on the solid foundation of love between individuals.

- Mahatma Gandhi

BLOG POST



Every day brings something new. What am I supposed to do with my life? I always struggle with questions like this, even now. When I was just a little boy, I used to spend my whole time thinking about becoming a writer. Was it just for fun, or not? Over a year ago, however, I succeeded in publishing my first book. Unexpectedly, I had satisfied my greatest expectation. Sometimes I look at it, browse its pages, and all I can see is just millions of black unintelligible signs on a white, pale surface.

Black and white. Perhaps, just ink on hundreds of pages. So for months, I have been asking myself: did it give some meaning to my life? But then, at some point, I got to the point.

I am living and volunteering in Scotland now. I must have read somewhere its ancient name, "Alba". Etymologically, it comes from the original Indo-European root for "white". On the other hand, in Italy we call "alba" the sunrise. In both cases, there is something related to a sense of beginning, the start of something new. Wasn't my child's aspiration a sort of premonition to me? Wasn't I advising myself to carry on dreaming that dream of always trying to be something else? So today I know that things never stop starting again, and then again. Far in a distant future I will browse my past years: I hope to find a man who couldn't help falling in love with his hopes. We are white pages to be written, all of us.

To be continued...

Written by Filippo Parisi  
Blog 1 of 5



## Volunteer Corner

"I chose this project as I loved the idea of working with an international NGO in Spain that shared my values, and helping them increase their online presence and expand their volunteering groups across Madrid. SCI has such a rich history, and I'm so excited to contribute to this! While a 10-month placement could seem daunting, I'm looking forward to really getting to know the city and meeting people here."

-Elinor's Story

## In the name of LOVE

Donate today to  
International Voluntary Service and  
help us spread the love!!!

