



ORGANIZE A WORKCAMP IN YOUR COMMUNITY

A HANDBOOK FOR ORGANIZERS OF INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY PROJECTS



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INTRODUCTION

Dear supporters of international volunteering,

We are happy that you are reading our brochure called “Organize a workcamp in your community – A handbook for organizers of international voluntary projects”. This handbook is an aggregate of many years of practice gained by INEX-SDA and experience of organizers of voluntary projects.

This handbook is intended for local authorities, members of non-governmental organizations and public-benefit corporations, non-formal groups, active individuals and volunteers - for all of you who are engaged in a community project and are looking for volunteers, or for those who just have an idea and are curious about international volunteering.

This handbook is a practical guide that will take you step by step through the whole process of preparation, organization and evaluation of an international voluntary project. It also includes examples of good practice of projects that are already running. We recommend viewing it as a coherent work, with every chapter having its own place and meaning.

We hope you will find a lot of inspiration while reading,

INEX-SDA

I. ABOUT THE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION INEX-SDA

INEX – Association for Voluntary Activities (INEX-SDA) is a Czech non-governmental and non-profit organization established in 1991. Since then it operates in the area of **international volunteering and intercultural learning**. The mission of INEX-SDA is to promote the development of a tolerant, inclusive and open society and the development of an active and responsible attitude towards the world around us, not only in the Czech Republic, but worldwide. We want to achieve our mission through voluntary projects and educational programs and campaigns.



We are engaged especially in topics connected with **the global development, intercultural education and active citizenship**. We offer international voluntary projects (so called workcamps) focused on the topics of **ecology, social work with the elderly, children and youth, restoration of sites or community development**. Every year, more than 700 Czech volunteers participate in our partner projects abroad and another 360 volunteers (both foreign and Czech) are involved in projects in the Czech Republic.

We also promote **sport** as a tool for inclusion and education through our *Football for Development* campaign. We support partners and individuals who organize their own voluntary projects. We create **space for personal development** and cooperation with other volunteers in our *Volunteers Club*. Thanks to our campaign *Volunteering for All* **we support volunteers** with fewer opportunities - the disabled or those from socially disadvantaged families.

We are members of the *Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations* (www.alliance-network.eu), *Service Civil International* network (www.sci.ngo) and others.

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC - WORKCAMPS

Together with our local partners – mainly municipalities and non-profit organizations – we organize more than 30 short-term international voluntary projects (so called workcamps) every year in the Czech Republic. Altogether, more than 300 Czech and foreign volunteers and around 60 Czech voluntary campleaders participate in these projects annually.

We arrange the participation of volunteers, selection and preparation of the campleaders, we provide training and support to municipalities and organizations on workcamp organization, we hold networking meetings and promote the projects of our partners on both national and international level.

Our goals are to promote volunteering and active citizenship on local and global level and to increase the impact and the quality of voluntary projects through the development of a long-term partnership.

For more information visit www.inexsda.cz.

II. WHAT IS A WORKCAMP?

A workcamp (or an international voluntary project) is:

1. a non-profit project beneficial for the society,
2. a stay of an international group of volunteers in a certain place/local community,
3. a space for personal development of all parties involved.

1. A non-profit project beneficial for the society. The initiative to organize a workcamp comes from the local community and it is based on its actual needs. The workcamp takes place in a local community or in an organization, it fits into its long-term visions/goals and regular activities, which it complements and enriches. The workcamp has a potential to support activities that require resources which are otherwise not available (human, financial and other resources). Local hosts are mainly municipalities and non-profit NGOs.

2. A stay of an international group of volunteers. As the name suggests, a workcamp has certain characteristics of a summer camp: duration of 2 to 3 weeks, a group of people from different countries and cultures, often only basic accommodation, common cooking, sharing daily tasks. The participation of volunteers in all parts of the program, both in work tasks agreed on and in free time activities, is a key aspect of the workcamp. The connection with the local community in all possible aspects (both during the work and during the free time) is a very desirable feature of the project.

3. A space for personal development. An essential part of the workcamps is personal development of all the people involved. Among others it is the development of language skills, team work, personal initiative, common responsibility and collective decision making, understanding different cultures and cultural values, and even specific technical skills. Workcamps also have an influence on personal values and attitudes.

Context:

Throughout the world, workcamps are a widespread means of supporting public benefit intentions of organizations and municipalities. Every year, over 2000 workcamps take place in 70 countries of Europe, Asia, America and Africa. The first workcamp took place in 1920 in France, near Verdun. Its purpose was to strengthen the international peace and solidarity. Workcamps today still carry these basic ideas and they are gradually extended to other current topics, such as the active citizenship and sustainable development.

Workcamps give you the opportunity to:

- carry out a **particular work or project** to support your organization or municipality with a bigger group of volunteers,
- support **the intercultural exchange** and promote **the idea of volunteering** (enrich your community life and create opportunities for active participation of local residents),
- **broaden the public and medial awareness** of your organization or municipality due to the participation of volunteers from abroad,
- encourage the local youth to **learn foreign languages**,
- **improve personal relations** on the local level and improve the attitude of local residents towards foreigners,
- **educate the volunteers** on the topic of your project (ecological problems, inclusion of disadvantaged people, restoration of historical sites, rural development, etc.),
- get **contact information on many active people** both in your country and abroad.

III. BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORKCAMPS

In this chapter we will take you through all the different aspects of the workcamps – topics, duration and usual period when workcamps take place (seasons of the year), number and age of the volunteers, language of the workcamp and its timetable.

Work activities on a workcamp have to fulfil the following conditions: it has to be beneficial for the public, non-profitable, meaningful and suitable for a group of volunteers from abroad as well as from the Czech Republic. The activities of the volunteers must not replace jobs for wage, however, the volunteers are allowed to work together with employees and thus contribute to the development of their intercultural competences.

1. Themes of the projects:

Ecology: maintenance of national parks, nature preserves, forests and public greenery, work in plant nurseries, planting of tree seedlings, contribution to ecological farming, restoration and maintenance of parks, work in eco-centers, contribution to environmental education.

Renovation, construction and restoration activities: work in the public space (installation of decorations or playgrounds, restoration of forgotten sites, reconstruction of playgrounds), construction and restoration of walls, trails, community gardens, renovation of non-profit organizations' properties, landscaping.

Cultural, artistic and educational activities: help with organization of festivals, workshops, summer camps, local celebrations and cultural events, discussions for schools and for public, organization of exhibitions, blogging.

Social projects: teaching English to children and preparing free time activities for them, work with the elderly, people with handicap or people from excluded communities, work with refugees, etc.

Protection of the cultural heritage: help with restoration of castles, churches, cemeteries and other historical sites, renovation of buildings or objects important for the history or for the culture, assistance with archeological excavations.

2. Duration of a workcamp and when it usually takes place:

Most of the workcamps last for 2 to 3 weeks and they usually take place during the summer (June to September). Workcamps out of the main season (autumn – spring) are less frequent and they usually have a different work topic corresponding to the weather conditions. Fewer people go to workcamps in this period and there is a higher percentage of participants over 30 years old.

3. Number of participants and their age:

Basically everyone can participate in a workcamp. The most important thing is to be actively involved in all the workcamp activities and to be a part of the group. Flexibility and willingness to adapt to the local environment and conditions are necessary characteristics of the participants. In general it is people aged 18 to 26, mainly students, who participate in the workcamps, but usually there is no maximum age limit. Participation of people aged 30 to 60 is not an exception. INEX-SDA also organizes workcamps for teenagers (aged 15 to 17) and for families with children. Usually there is between 6 and 17 participants, plus 1 or 2 voluntary campleaders on every workcamp. You can find more information about participants in the section *Volunteers*.

4. Language of the project:

Within the group, volunteers communicate in English, but the hosts are not required to speak English. The voluntary campleaders, sent to the project by INEX-SDA, are prepared to translate from Czech to English and vice versa. Nevertheless, workcamp is a great opportunity to improve your language skills (and not only English).

5. Timetable:

A typical workcamp, which lasts for two weeks, includes 10 working days and 3 to 4 days off. The days off usually fall on the weekends. If the volunteers are required to work during the weekend (for example when they are helping to organize some social event) they should have their days off during the rest of the week. The volunteers usually work six hours a day, the rest of their time they spend doing other activities (educational and free time program, meeting the local community). The first and the last day of the workcamp are designated for the arrival and departure of the volunteers only. The campleaders usually arrive to the location of the workcamp one day before the volunteers.

4. PEOPLE – WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE WORKCAMP

Preparation and the workcamp itself is quite demanding on the organization team. It is important to have a good organization team – the more the merrier; and that way you will enjoy the workcamp better. Now let's talk about the roles of the three main actors who are involved in the workcamp: the local host of the workcamp, INEX-SDA, voluntary campleaders and the volunteers.

1. The local host of the workcamp

You can be the host of the workcamp if you are a non-profit organization, municipality or public-benefit corporation or a similar type of organization. As a host you are responsible for the work activities on the workcamp, you also need to provide the accommodation and food for the volunteers (both physically and financially), and if needs be, also their transportation to the work location. You are also involved in arranging the free time activities for the volunteers. More detailed information about your role is provided below, in a summary table (page 18).

The minimal requirement is one person from your organization or municipality, who will serve as **the main organizer of the workcamp**. He or she will communicate with INEX-SDA, plan the particular activities, coordinate the rest of the organization team and during the workcamp this person will have the main authority and responsibility. At the same time, it will be the contact person for the voluntary campleaders and for the group of volunteers.

Another important person in the organization team is the **technical work coordinator** who takes care of the technical side of all the work activities during the preparation and during the workcamp itself. (This coordinator can be the same person as the main organizer, but if possible, we recommend to entrust this role to someone else). You can also include other voluntary helpers in your team (for example driver to help with the shopping, active neighbors to lend you bikes) and other partners (local businesses, a school, etc.). For more information see chapter *How to engage local public in the workcamp*.

2. INEX-SDA

INEX-SDA plays its role in supporting the host during all the phases of the workcamp, during preparation, during the workcamp itself and during evaluation. We will provide an international group of volunteers, choose and train voluntary campleaders, arrange health insurance for potential injuries and liability insurance, and we will also cover the expenses of the campleaders. We will also help you to promote your workcamp. More detailed information about the role of INEX-SDA is provided below, in a summary table (page 19).

3. Voluntary campleaders

One or two voluntary campleaders from the Czech Republic with a good knowledge of English are a part of every workcamp. These campleaders are prepared for their tasks by participating in the Educational Cycle of INEX-SDA. Intensive three day training and obligatory first aid course are included within this cycle. The campleaders are usually young motivated people, who already have an experience with participating in a voluntary project abroad.

Apart from coordinating the volunteers during the workcamp, the voluntary campleaders from INEX-SDA also help with preparation and evaluation of the workcamp. Approximately 5 weeks before the beginning of the workcamp, the campleaders will arrange a meeting with you (so-called preparation visit) to get to know the location of the workcamp (where the project will take place) and discuss all the necessary details concerning the organization of the workcamp. Based on this preparation visit, the campleaders will prepare a several pages long detailed description of all the relevant information about the workcamp in English for the participants (so-called infosheet) that the volunteers will receive roughly one month before the beginning of the project. The campleaders arrive to the workcamp one day before the volunteers and they will help you with the last arrangements before the arrival of the participants.



The role of voluntary campleaders on a workcamp:

- they communicate with the volunteers before the workcamp,
- they work with the group of volunteers, solve potential conflicts and problems,
- they support intercultural learning and help to overcome language barriers,
- they take care of everyday needs of the group (cooking, daily schedule),
- they support the host in work coordination, motivate the group during the work,
- they support the host in preparation of educational and free time activities, including the contact with the local people,
- they carry out intermediate evaluations with the group and the final evaluation with INEX-SDA.

Set aside enough time for the preparation visit of the campleaders. Prepare a list of all the planned work activities and a timetable of other activities for the campleaders. Give the campleaders enough time to express themselves and come up with their own ideas.

4. Volunteers

Volunteers from all over the world as well as from the Czech Republic can take part in the workcamps. The vast majority of the volunteers comes from the EU and other European countries, but also from South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, China, USA, Canada and other countries. To maintain the international aspect of the projects, only two volunteers from each country can participate in one project. Typically the volunteers get to know each other only at the workcamp location, but sometimes they communicate before the workcamp on social networks. The volunteers do not get any payment for their work. They have to cover the expenses for traveling, health insurance and registration fee to the sending organization themselves.

When participating in a workcamp, volunteers usually expect that they will...

- ... get to know the country, local culture and local people in an unconventional way,
- ... spend their holidays doing something useful, without high costs and they will take part in a meaningful project,
- ... learn about interesting initiatives and projects, get new skills, gain experience for further career development,
- ... improve their English and experience life in an international group,
- ... meet people from all over the world, find new friends and experience something extraordinary.

Be prepared for cultural differences and different habits of the volunteers – for example it is not a matter of course that all of the participants will know how to ride a bike or swim. You also need to consider various eating habits that the volunteers may have. The campleaders will guide you through these matters.

Qualifications and motivations:

The volunteers are not required to have any formal qualifications. However, they should have a strong motivation to help where it is needed. For this reason you should offer only such tasks that are suitable for volunteers that are less-experienced and not qualified. However, if you provide proper training and supervision, even more demanding tasks may be completed. In any case it is necessary to acquaint the volunteers ahead with the program and goals of the planned activities. It is also important to prepare enough work for everyone and make sure the work is well organized. If possible, prepare work that is variable and its results are clearly visible – this will help to motivate the volunteers and keep them motivated throughout the project. For this reason we also recommend organizing an introductory meeting with the group before the work itself begins, explaining the mission and activities of your organization and introducing the timetable of the workcamp. The volunteers will work with a greater enthusiasm when they know which tasks to expect during the project and how their work will contribute to the whole.

Choosing the volunteers:

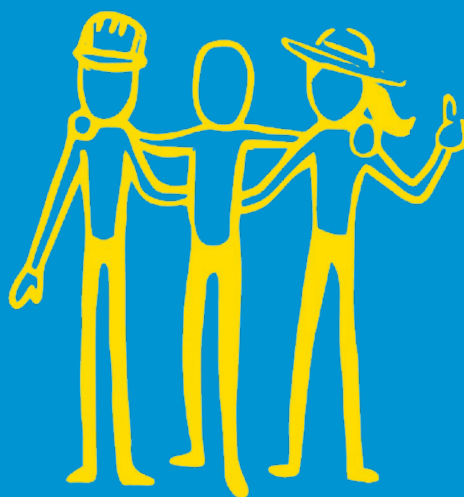
We choose the volunteers based on the applications we get from our partner organizations abroad (so called sending organizations). All the workcamps are usually also open for volunteers from the Czech Republic, who can apply through INEX-SDA. In case your workcamp includes some more specific or demanding tasks (for example work with children, with the elderly, with disadvantaged people, art, etc.), it is possible to ask the volunteers for a motivation letter (in this letter they describe their motivation, their interests, experience, knowledge and expectations) or other supplementary documents (extract from the Criminal Register, freedom from infection certificate). In case the volunteers need a visa, INEX-SDA will provide them with an official invitation to the Czech Republic and deal with all the related administration.

The volunteers should not be considered just a cheap (or free) labor – do not let them just carry out the regular work of technical services in your municipality, think about the added value of their activities. The volunteers also do not want to be just an “amusement from exotic cultures”, they want to do something meaningful. Also be prepared that some of the tasks that you consider an everyday routine might be unknown to some of the volunteers and that they might have not done them before. In the beginning you will need to explain them how to do it.



5. Summary: Tasks for the local host and support from INEX-SDA

A host of the workcamp		INEX-SDA
Preparation and organization of a useful activity beneficial for the public that is sufficiently extensive and variable.		Personal consulting of your intention and the work planned within the project.
Explaining the goals and missions of your project to the volunteers, describing the work tasks and work specifics.		Support during the preparation, during the workcamp itself and during the evaluation.
Arranging and paying for the suitable accommodation for the volunteers and for the campleaders in a place that is safe for their health (accommodation in tents is also an option).		Selecting and training the voluntary campleaders.
Securing meals for the volunteers and campleaders (including weekends) – if possible, allow the volunteers to cook for themselves (at least sometimes).		Putting together an international team of volunteers, including all the visa administration.
Arranging a meaningful free time program related to the topic of the project (for example workshops, field trips, meetings and discussions with the local community, NGOs and municipality) – together with the voluntary campleaders.		Securing basic liability insurance and basic health insurance for the volunteers and campleaders of the project.
Providing all the tools and equipment required for completing the work tasks, providing safety protection if necessary.		Preparing practical information about the project for the volunteers in English and sending it out to them.
Health and safety training for the volunteers during the work on the project, continuous technical supervision.		Covering the travel expenses and pocket money for the voluntary campleaders.
Arranging the transportation of the volunteers to the place of work (if they cannot get there on foot).		Help with promoting the project.



Weekends are an integral part of the workcamp and the host is obliged to provide food and accommodation even during the weekends, when the volunteers can enjoy their free time. In case the volunteers leave for a one or two-day trip, the particular conditions for accommodation and food can be agreed on with the group. Usually the host provides the same amount of food money that he or she would provide during a regular working day. If the expenses related to sleeping outside of the workcamp location exceed the usual budget of the project, the volunteers must cover these expenses themselves.

V. CONDITIONS FOR WORKCAMP ORGANIZATION

1. Accommodation:

The host of the workcamp provides accommodation for the volunteers free of charge during the whole project. The accommodation does not have to be very luxurious – basic rooms with simple facilities are sufficient, under certain circumstances it is even possible to accommodate the volunteers in tents. The accommodation should include showers, restrooms and a possibility of common cooking. If the shower is not available as part of the accommodation, the host should offer a possibility to take a shower not far from the accommodation place. It is not necessary for the volunteers to sleep in beds – mattresses or sleeping mats are suitable as well. It is usual that volunteers bring their own sleeping bags and/or sleeping mats. If it is possible, we recommend that you provide a living room that is separated from the sleeping room of the volunteers.

The Scout Association meeting rooms, schools, local authority buildings, gyms, youth dormitories, family centers, tents, tee-pees and other similar facilities are all examples of possible places of accommodation.

2. Food:

The host of the project should provide and pay for meals for the volunteers. The best way is to allow the volunteers to cook for themselves, at least once a day. Based on our experience, we found that the common cooking can contribute to a faster strengthening of the group and it is also an important part of the intercultural learning on the international projects. You can either provide the food to the group directly, or you can give food money to the voluntary campleaders and the volunteers will do the shopping themselves. The minimal contribution for food is 90 CZK/person/day (approximately 3.5 €).

In case the meals are provided for the volunteers in a canteen, restaurant etc., we recommend giving the group an opportunity to cook as a part of an international evening during which the volunteers can prepare typical meals of their countries for the rest of the group. Such an intercultural evening can also be a great opportunity to meet the local people. If the group is cooking on its own, it would be most welcome if you could help the campleaders with the shopping time to time (e.g. with a big shopping before the beginning of the project).

3. Technical supervision and safety:

The volunteers (including the voluntary campleaders) are people of many different professions and interests, but most probably they do not have any experience with the work that you will need them to do. No matter what kind of work the volunteers will do during the workcamp, it is necessary to provide suitable technical supervision and ensure safety. The campleaders will help you with translation of the work safety training for the volunteers. The volunteers are also required to arrange their own health insurance. By law, INEX-SDA has to provide basic health insurance for case of an injury and also liability insurance to all the volunteers (including the campleaders).

4. Free time activities:

Workcamps are a unique form of non-formal education – both for the volunteers and for the local community. Apart from the desire to help to a particular cause or the opportunity to get to know the people from all over the world, volunteers have other motivations to participate in a workcamp. One of the reasons to take part in a workcamp may be the desire to find out more about your initiative or about the general topic of your project. Many of the participants also want to meet the local people and discover more about their everyday life. More information about the free time activities and an advice on how to plan these are included in the chapter *How to engage local public in the workcamp*.



VI. WHY ORGANIZE A WORKCAMP: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL MOTIVATION

In this chapter we will focus on the topic of the motivation to organize a workcamp, because making the reasons for doing so clear is fundamental for the overall success of the project.

Motivation

Together with your team, sit down and try to answer these questions in as much detail as possible:

- Why do you want to organize a workcamp?
- How should the workcamp contribute to you?
- What kind of change should take place as a result of the workcamp?
- What needs to be done in order for the result to match your expectations?
- What can be the risks threatening the result?

Make sure that the vision of the ideal result of the project is the same for all the members of the organization team and that you are able to communicate it clearly to the volunteers. Be open to their suggestions.

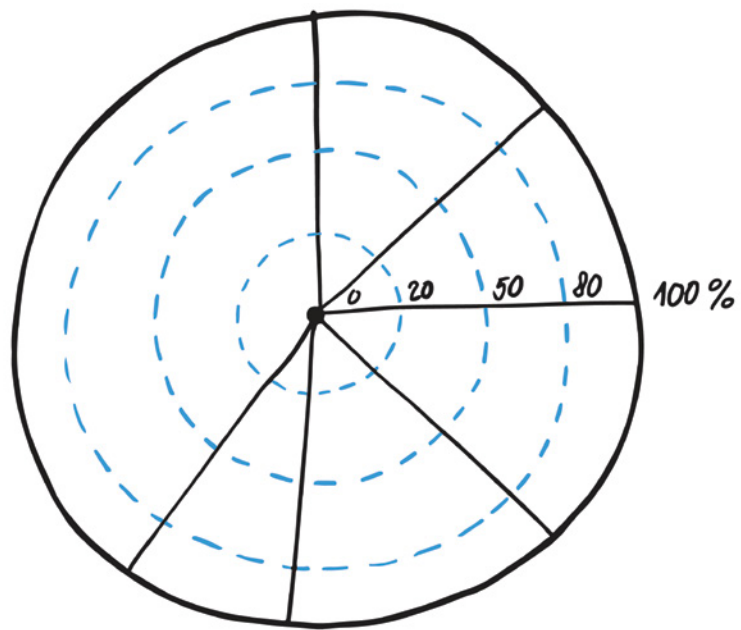
There are two levels of **motivation – internal and external**. The internal motivation includes your personal goals and your personal development (Why do I want to do this? How am I going to benefit from it personally?). The external motivation is composed of goals with broader focus (How is it going to contribute to the location and to the local people? What will be the benefits for your organization or municipality?). Imagine that the project needs to have the potential to motivate the volunteers that are going to take part. The particular motivations may vary and they only depend on you, more precisely, they are based on the specific needs of a certain place or organization. It is important to be aware of these motivations and keep them in mind during the whole process of preparation and organization of the workcamp. It will be also easier for you to answer the questions of the local people, of the campleaders or the volunteers. In the following section, let's focus on the first level which is the personal development.



Personal development – a tool for mapping the key competences

You may have already been on a workcamp yourself and it seems like a piece of cake to organize one. But do not be mistaken: there are hours and hours of hard work behind it and that is why we recommend – do not do it alone! Find someone to partner with and take an advantage of the cooperation, everyone has different natural assets. Divide the tasks in such a way that they are fun for you or they are a new challenge (if you want to stand up to it).

Now we would like to share a simple tool which can contribute to your personal development or strengthening your team. This tool is called *Key Competences* and we recommend using it in the initial phases of the preparation of your workcamp.



Step 1 – Mapping your competences

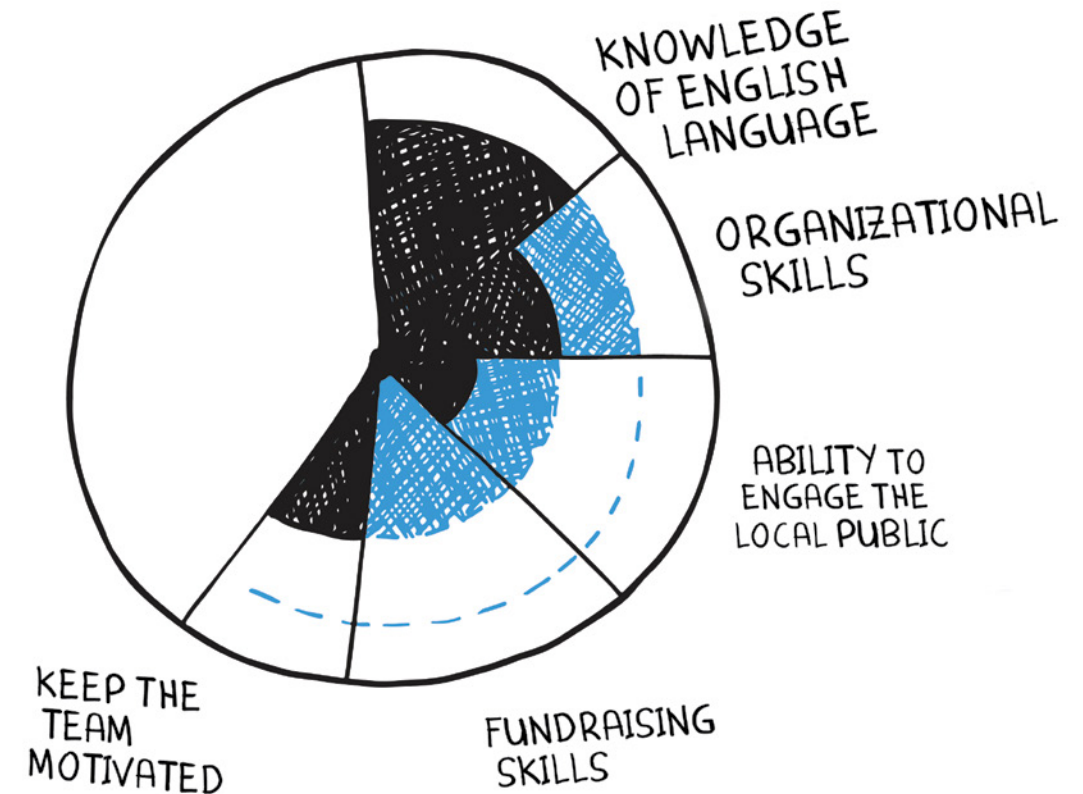
In this step you want to make a survey of your abilities in the different fields/skills and consider which areas you would like to potentially improve.

Step 2 – Assessing your strengths and weaknesses

1. On the outer margin of the circle, write down the areas (competences, skills) that you think are the most important for the preparation and organization of a workcamp. Each of these areas has its own sector and the number of areas is not limited. However, before you take the next step, it is important to choose the most essential areas that you are going to focus on.
2. On your own, mark your abilities in each of the areas on the scale from 0 to 100 (0 is the center of the circle, 100 is the outer margin).
3. You can color your sections to make your pie more illustrative (in Fig. 2 we used black color).

The entire pie chart does not have to be filled.

We recommend to concentrate on 5-6 most important areas.



Step 3 – Decide which area you want to work on

Personal development

1. Look at each of the areas and consider which areas you are satisfied with and which abilities you would like to further improve. The number of areas is not limited, but to make the work with your “pie” more effective, it is the best if you choose 5 to 6 key areas.
2. Now focus only on the marked areas and choose the ones that are the most relevant to you, those that you want to work on during the preparation phase of your workcamp. It is important to choose the areas that you will really be able to work on during the preparation of the workcamp.
3. Specify how far you want to improve (Fig. 2 – marked by the red color) and how you are going to achieve this progress. For every area define the specific steps that you are going to take in order to achieve the desired progress and also include a timetable.
4. Look at your target improvements again and consider if it is really possible to achieve them in the given time period.
5. Just for yourself, decide how you are going to work with this key competences chart – where you are going to put it and how you are going to make sure that you will get back to it.
6. Work with these areas as you proceed with the preparation of the project.

Example: Kate, a volunteer, is preparing a workcamp for the first time and she realized that she needs to improve her English in order to feel more comfortable when she talks to the volunteers. She knows that the most important thing is just to start speaking and not to think about the grammar too much, she had enough of grammar lessons when she was at school. How far does Kate want to improve? Her goal is to stand in front of the volunteers on the first day they arrive and welcome them, and still have a good feeling that the communication is fluent and everybody can understand her. How to achieve this goal? First, she is going to find out who in her community can speak English well and then ask them if they would be willing to meet her time to time and have a conversation. Within a week she is going to talk to this person and before the workcamp starts, she will achieve her goal of “improving her English”.

Development of competences of your team/Searching for members of your team

You can use this tool in the same way to find out about the competences of each of the members of your team or identifying which abilities your team lacks.



VII. STEP BY STEP: FROM THE IDEA TO THE WORKCAMP ITSELF

1. Planning the workcamp
2. Preparing a description of your project and signing an agreement (*January – February*)
3. Publishing a workcamp offer (*March*)
4. Searching for campleaders and their training (*April – June*)
5. A preparation visit of the campleaders (*5 weeks before the workcamp*)
6. Putting together a team of volunteers (*1 week before the workcamp*)
7. Giving publicity to your workcamp and promoting it (*about 5 days before the workcamp*)
8. The workcamp itself (*2 – 3 weeks during the period of June – September*)
9. Assessment (evaluation) of the workcamp with INEX-SDA (*within 1 month after the workcamp*)
10. Meeting of the workcamp organizers (*November*)



STEP 1 – planning the workcamp

Are you interested in inviting volunteers for a workcamp? First you need to decide on:

- **location of the workcamp and work activities** for the volunteers – the work should be based on local needs. Identify these together with the local authorities, associations, active neighbors, etc.,
- **facilities** (accommodation for the volunteers, their meals),
- **budget** (which sources can be used for covering the costs of accommodation and food – more about this in the chapter *How to get funding for the workcamp – local fundraising*,
- **human resources** – which people in your organization or municipality would be able to take care of the volunteers, which local volunteers could help with the preparation and organization of the workcamp.

STEP 2 – preparing a description of your project and signing an agreement

Prepare a draft description of your workcamp based on the form sent by INEX-SDA (the most important information is about the type of work, accommodation, meals, and suggestions for free time activities: what can you offer to the volunteers). Then you will arrange a meeting with INEX-SDA. A coordinator from INEX-SDA will come to the location of the workcamp and together you will discuss all the important details based on the description you will have provided earlier. After the meeting, together with INEX-SDA you will prepare the final description of the project and create the so called advertisement for the volunteers. We are will stipulate all the detailed terms of our cooperation in a written agreement.

STEP 3 – publishing a workcamp offer

After signing the agreement, INEX-SDA will publish the workcamp advertisement on its website and also in international databases, which can be accessed by the foreign organizations sending volunteers. INEX-SDA starts to receive applications from the volunteers.

STEP 4 – searching for campleaders and their training

As soon as the workcamp offer is published, we start to search for the voluntary campleaders. Applicants can sign up either in pairs or individually. It means that it is common that they do not know each other. Also their experience differs – all the new campleaders always have to take part in the preparation training.

STEP 5 – the preparation visit of the campleaders

As soon as the campleaders of your workcamp are chosen, INEX-SDA will connect them with you. You will meet the campleaders, discuss the work together, the program of the workcamp, you will look at the accommodation and other facilities together. Based on this meeting, the campleaders will help you with preparation of infosheet for the volunteers. Later they will translate this information into English and send it to INEX-SDA. In this step it is important to announce any possible changes that might have taken place since you have written the description.

STEP 6 – putting together a team of volunteers

INEX-SDA will send out the detailed infosheet to the volunteers who will confirm their participation based on this information (4 weeks before the workcamp). INEX-SDA will finalize the choosing of volunteers and keep you updated on the filling up of your workcamp (3 weeks before the workcamp). Approximately 1 week before the workcamp, we will inform you on the final number of participants and send you more information about them.

STEP 7 – giving publicity to your workcamp and promoting it

Approximately one week before the workcamp, the campleaders will prepare a press release in cooperation with you. INEX-SDA will send it out to their contact people in the media afterwards and you can do the same.

STEP 8 – the workcamp itself

The campleaders will come to the workcamp location one day before the volunteers. This is a time-proven practice, especially when we consider the necessity of final preparations and harmonizing the timetable. When the workcamp begins, it is important to introduce your organization/municipality in detail to the volunteers and explain the mission of your project together with the planned activities. At the same time it is important to set down the rules of the workcamp. Remember that during the workcamp you should be open to a feedback and create proper conditions for it (ask both the campleaders and the volunteers about their satisfaction and at the same time give a feedback to the campleaders and volunteers).

STEP 9 – an assessment (evaluation) of the workcamp

The final evaluation of the cooperation happens on several levels: with INEX-SDA, voluntary campleaders, the team of local people that were involved in the project, local authorities and partners. The goal of the evaluation is to find out which practices worked well during the preparation and during the workcamp itself, and which practices should be changed in what way. In order to get the overall feedback from the volunteers, the campleaders will distribute evaluation forms to them. Based on these forms, INEX-SDA will prepare a summary and share it with you. However, if you want to carry out any other form of evaluation with the volunteers, it would be most welcome. At the same time there will be an evaluation of the cooperation between you and INEX-SDA.

STEP 10 – a meeting of the workcamp organizers

Every year at the end of the volunteering season, INEX-SDA organizes a networking meeting for all the organizations and municipalities that host workcamps. In this meeting you will get an opportunity to meet the other organizers, share experiences and gain new inspiration.





VIII. HOW TO GET FUNDING FOR THE WORKCAMP

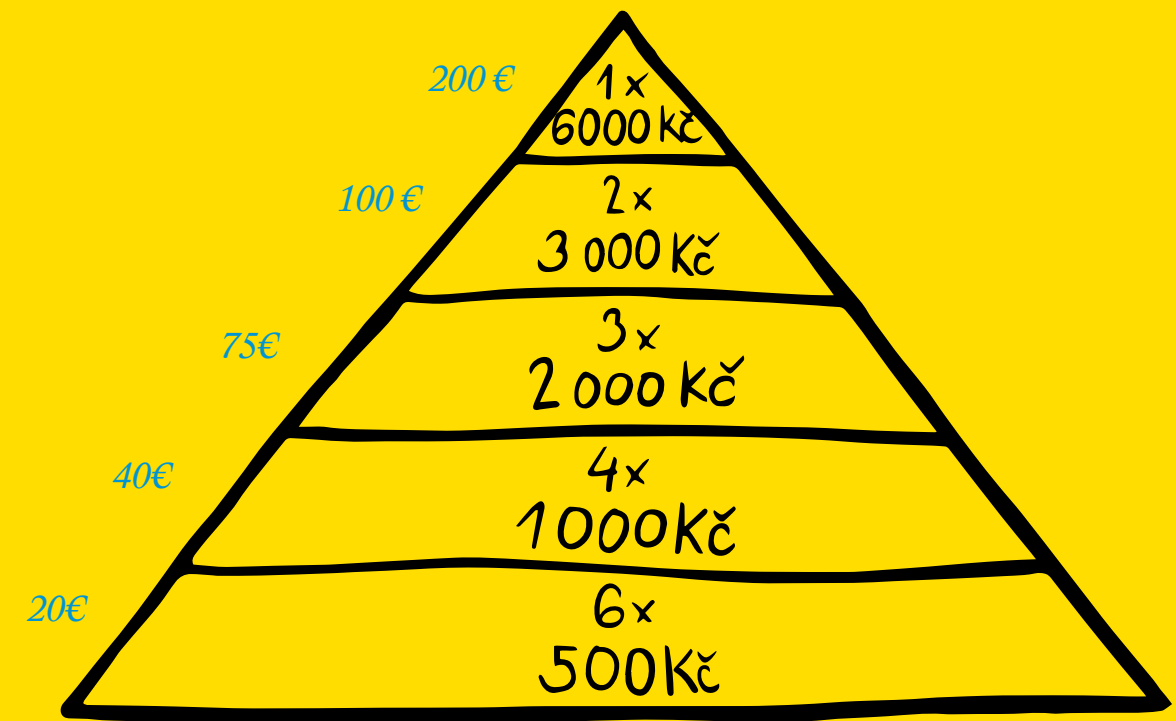
– LOCAL FUNDRAISING

There are different means to get financial support. Consider how much time you have and which human resources are available for obtaining the amount of money needed. It is important to choose the right form of fundraising.

What can you do?

- Submit a **grant application** at an institution that supports similar activities (In the Czech Republic, such foundations are for example *Nadace VIA*, *Nadace Proměny*, *Nadace O2* and others – you can find these for example on the website *Econnect* (www.ecn.cz). At the same time you can pre-pay a grant calendar called *Neziskovky.cz*.
- File an **application** at a corresponding **city council or regional authority** whose individual departments invite grant applications. It is possible that your project falls under more than one grant round. Regional authorities also invite grant applications focused on the work with the youth.
- You can approach the businesses that have their own charitable funds or that have a department devised for dealing with applications for (and not only) financial support.
- Organize a charitable fair, a dance, a jumble sale of clothes, a craft workshop or any other social event that may attract potential contributors and donors.
- Contact the organizers of a fair, a dance, etc. ahead and ask them for donating part of their revenue to organization of your workcamp.
- You can also use the crowd funding method (on-line fundraising). To do so you can use for example the following websites: *HitHit* (www.hithit.com) or *Startovač* (www.startovac.cz).
- Talk to a few selected people in person and ask them for a financial support (so called “face to face” method).

Note: You do not have to ask the donors directly for money but you can ask particular people or businesses to provide a certain service for free or with a discount (for example a bakery or a dairy farm). In this way you can lower the total costs of your workcamp.



1. Fundraising “face to face”

Divide the whole amount of money

If you cannot think of anyone at first who could provide all the money that is necessary for your project, you can divide the whole amount into several smaller figures. Dividing the whole amount of money into a pyramid is the best (in the lower floor is the smallest figure and then it gradually increases, you can divide the total amount into any number of smaller figures but you still need to get the whole amount that is required when you add these figures together). You will see that you can get the smaller figures quite easily from a few people around you. In the example, you need to get the total amount of 25,000 CZK (approximately 920 €).

Find the right people

- Take a paper and a pen and make a list of people that you could, or would like to, ask for a financial support. Do not set any limits, write down even the people that you are afraid you cannot get to. Soon you may find out that someone knows them, you just do not know about it yet.
- You can include two or three more people into your fundraising team, people who know you and who support your cause. It is the best if their social contacts differ from yours. Ask them to become your ambassadors and thus enlarge your list of potential donors. At the same time, ask them to pick the people they know from your list of potential contributors. Maybe they could ask these contributors for support themselves or they could arrange a meeting with them for you, or at least give you their contact information.
- Then you only need to gather your courage and ask the people from your list for a meeting – start with those that are easier to access (either personally or through a third person), then continue to the people that are harder to get to.

Believe in yourself and others will follow

- It is necessary to be well prepared for every meeting.
- You should have a short information booklet in your hand that will provide a basic description of your project (including numbers and facts) and also some tangible story. Making a mark in a form of written booklet is good for your cause.
- Do not push too hard, do not go to the meeting with a feeling that you need to get the money no matter what – you are coming to offer a partnership and introduce yourself (delegate of a project) as a person with a vision and an idea.
- Be prepared for any kind of questions. Be honest and humble but also brave.

Give thanks

Give thanks even if you are refused. They gave you their time, they heard your cause and it is possible that they would support you in the future. Thank them if they say yes and try to be a bit imaginative. Surprise your donor with the form of your thanks. Little something, even hand-made, is sometimes more pleasant for a person than a bottle of expensive wine.

Note: Those people that you ask for support are the same people like yourself. Try to picture yourself in their situation and imagine that someone else is asking you for support. This exercise will make it much easier for you to prepare the information booklet and to get ready for the meeting. Good luck.

2. An example of the costs of a workcamp

This is an example of a workcamp that took place for two weeks in the town of Písek, in 2014. The volunteers (12 people altogether) were helping with restoration and cleaning of a Jewish synagogue and on the grounds of an elementary school. The gym of the school served for their accommodation, they did the shopping themselves and they cooked in a training kitchen in the school. The organizers managed to get donations in the form of payment in kind (for example from the local bakery or from the garden of their neighbors). The work equipment, tools and safety protection were provided by the synagogue and the school. The educational and free time activities were provided partly for free in exchange for the work of the volunteers (free entrance to the school playing field, course in Jewish dances, lecture about the history of Jewish community in Písek, etc.) and partly paid by the volunteers themselves (a trip to a castle, to the ZOO). The finances for the workcamp were provided by the Jewish community and a few smaller donations from the local businesses that were invited for an international evening prepared by the volunteers as a form of gratitude.

Food (common cooking)	100CZK (4 €) /12 ppl/14 day	16 800,-
Accommodation (free in the local elementary school)		0,-
Transportation of the organizer (their own car)		2 000,-
Free time activities (contribution for the volunteers)	340CZK (13 €)/12 ppl	4 080,-
TOTAL		22 880,-

In case it is your non-profit organization or municipality organizing the workcamp, you should also add the costs of sufficient amount of material required for the completion of the work tasks, the power used, work tools and safety protection, and potentially even accommodation and transportation of the volunteers to the place of work.

IX. HOW TO PRESENT A WORKCAMP

When you organize a workcamp, you find yourself in situations when you need to present your ideas and plans to other people. You need to learn new techniques of communication, get rid of your stage fright, stand up to new challenges related to presenting various topics to others or looking for more effective ways of addressing different groups of people. In this chapter we are going to focus mainly on the oral presentation, even though some of the techniques presented here may be used also for the preparation of written materials.

None of us has to stay where he/she is. You can always further improve your presentation and communication skills. If you gather the courage and try different types of speech, you may discover new approaches to passing information onto other people. Suddenly you can feel better while giving a speech, you can use different collocations and examples or stand in front of a new audience. Then maybe it will be easier to understand you and the communication will seem simpler even to yourself. In this chapter we are going to offer several practical techniques on effective presentation of your workcamp to various audiences.

A presentation in an elevator

This technique is called “a presentation in an elevator” because it reminds us of taking an elevator. The presenter has a very limited amount of time to attract the attention of listeners and persuade them about his or her cause. For sure you know the emotions that you feel when someone asks you what it is that you do. Suddenly you could not find an answer for such a simple question. You had so many things in your mind that you could not decide where to start. Your opportunity to address a potential client or partner suddenly vanished. Do not let another chance to address others with your idea or project to slip between your fingers.

What should it look like?

This type of presentation is brief, persuasive and memorable. Its purpose is to get the audience interested in your project or idea. Its maximal duration is 3 minutes and it has to point out the unique aspects of your project.

When to use it?

You can use this technique in any type of situation. You never know when and under what circumstances you will get an opportunity to address your potential partner. Be ready and have your “elevator presentation” always prepared at hand. It is important to have several versions of your presentation in stock, each of them would fit for a different occasion. You should prepare a short one and then a longer one for experts and also for laymen who know nothing about the topic of your project.

How to make it?

Do not attempt to prepare your ideal presentation within a few minutes. Take your time. Use the help of your friends and colleagues that are directly involved in your project and get a feedback from them. When your presentation gets understandable, easily memorable and also interesting, that is when you have completed the ideal and final version. How do you know that your presentation is good? As soon as people show their interest, ask for further questions and want to find out more details about your project, you are half way there. If the people do not understand and are not sure what your project is all about, you still have some work to do.

The procedure

1. Identify your goal.
2. Explain what you do.
3. Take advantage of the uniqueness.
4. Include questions.
5. Put everything together.
6. Practice.

If your presentation is still too long, get rid of all the unnecessary parts, everything that is not absolutely essential. The shorter it is, the better. It is important to get the attention of your audience and get your listeners interested. However, the goal is not to reveal everything about your project within 20 seconds.

Three most important types of presentations based on their length:

1. Short: maximum of 5 to 10 words. Use it in situations of everyday, short introduction.
2. Medium: 60 seconds. You can use this presentation in situations when you need to make your listener interested within a very short time period.
3. Long: up to 3 minutes. You will use this type of presentation for example during meetings that you have arranged ahead.

Different forms of presentations:

1. official,
2. partner,
3. neighbor.

1. Official presentation

This presentation is intended for listeners that you do not know. That is why you address them in a formal way. During this type of presentation you should focus on the goal.

The goal

You should define the nature of the project or idea that you are presenting. Answering the following question will be helpful: What do you want your listener to do or to learn? You have to answer this question in one simple sentence. Do not make your presentation too complicated. One presentation should only have one goal. If you really feel the need to have more than one goal, divide your presentation into more sections and consider each of them to be an independent part. You will not be able to prepare and give an excellent presentation without defining your goal clearly. However, having a clear goal does not necessarily mean that your presentation is going to be amazing. But if you have no goal, it is going to be a disaster. Clearly stated goal is a basis for a good presentation.

Techniques that you can use:

- **Searching for more details:** Find a parallel between your presentation and something that is obvious for your listener. Often you can use a short story to demonstrate the core of your project.
- **Key words:** Together with your team, write down a list of as many key words related to your project as possible. Keep selecting the dozens of words that you thought of, until you choose one or two golden words that are going to become the basic building blocks of your presentation. Every time you get stuck on your presentation or you feel your head is blank, these words will be your pillars and starters.
- Together with your team, write down a list of as many key words related to your project as possible. Keep selecting the dozens of words that you thought of, until you choose one or two golden words that are going to become the basic building blocks of your presentation. Every time you get stuck on your presentation or you feel your head is blank, these words will be your pillars and starters.

„I want you to (do something) _____,
 firstly because _____,
 and secondly because _____.“

or:

„I would like you (to learn more) about _____.
 There are two important components, firstly _____
 and secondly _____.“

(The two key words that are the building blocks of your presentation will help you).

2. Partner presentation

In this type of presentation you should know more about your listener. It is even possible that the listener knows you. Or they can at least imagine your activities. During this type of presentation you should focus on the *advantage*.

The advantage

Now you have to introduce the advantages – privileges – better position that your partner would gain if he gets involved in your project. How do you know which particular factors are advantages for your partner? First, you should come to terms with the fact that you can never be sure. That is why you should try hard and provide rather more information than less. If you tell them less information, but you do it in an interesting way, your listeners will try to find out more during the time designated for questions. On the other hand, if you talk too much, your audience will stop listening and they will be waiting eagerly for the end of your presentation. They are not likely to raise any questions because they will be afraid that your answer would bore them to death. In one way or another, your partner will reveal what he or she considers an advantage, be it by their follow-up questions or based on your direct question: *How is your position going to improve by participating in our project?*

Techniques that you can use:

Uniqueness: Focus on the uniqueness of what you are offering. In what way is your idea different from the dozens of other projects that may be introduced to your partner?

3. Neighbor presentation

You can use this presentation “at random” for all the people that you know and talk to on everyday basis. During this type of presentation you should focus on the need.

The need

Imagine that you are baking a pie and find out that you ran out of flour and sugar. All the shops are closed. Many of you would just take their jacket and go to see the neighbor. You would tell him about your need – you need salt and sugar, you would ask politely and wait. And a few minutes later you can continue with your pie. This is so easy because we are presenting our need clearly and briefly and if possible, the neighbor will try to satisfy this need.

Techniques that you can use:

How to proceed: With workcamps it can be more complicated. You can still explain your need to your neighbor, for example: “I need you to show our volunteers how to sharpen the scythe properly,” but often this will not be enough. The neighbor may need more exact description of how to do it. It means that you need to specify your need not only in the what way, but also in the how way.

And now you can get started on your presentation. You can use the following structure:

For whom – who is your target group (your clients, local community, or the volunteers).

Why – which needs are you addressing.

What – what are your goals.

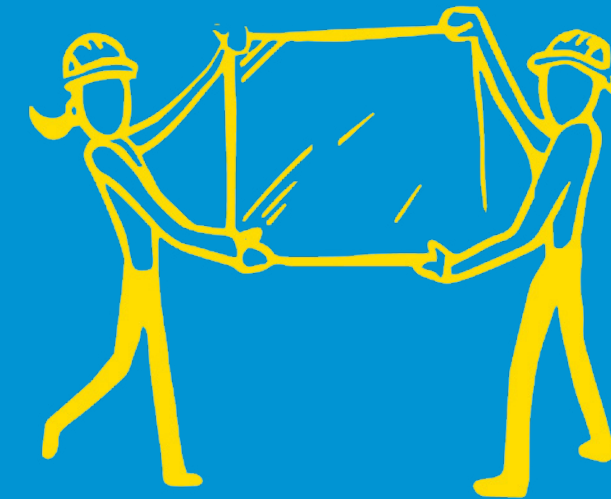
How – which activities do you want to carry out in order to achieve your goals.

When – date.

Where – place.

With whom – other potential partners.

How much – the budget, more specifically: the most important item in your budget.



X. HOW TO ENGAGE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN THE WORKCAMP

The workcamp is inseparably connected with the place where the volunteers live, work and spend their free time. Even though the time period of the workcamp is quite limited, we recommend thinking about all possible connections between volunteers and the local people. This chapter focuses on one of the possible methods for engaging the public in your projects. Among other things you will find examples of joint activities (both during the work and during the free time) which worked well on other workcamps.

Make sure to inform the local community in time about what you are preparing. The best way is to let them know as soon as you have the idea for a workcamp taking place in your community. Explain to the local people why the volunteers are coming and try to engage them in the project.

One possible way of doing so:

Draw a *community map* of your village or town and mark down

1. non-profit and other organizations that are involved in the community life (they organize free time activities for various target groups, they are trying to solve some social problems, they organize community or neighborhood events, etc.),
2. local authorities (write down the names of people that you can contact directly with your workcamp idea),
3. media (those that can help you with spreading the word about your workcamp, that can help to invite the neighbors to join community events with the volunteers) – radio, printed media (local, regional, or even national newspaper), regional TV. You can also promote your workcamp with leaflets. INEX-SDA will help you with writing and sending out the press release (see above).
4. active individuals:
 - a. the elderly – maybe some of them could organize a course in cooking of the traditional dishes,
 - b. mothers – children know no language barriers and together you can play children games from the home countries of the volunteers,
 - c. other active neighbors,
5. local human resources (local produce manufacturers – exhibits, workshops; instructors of sport activities: volleyball game, yoga class, etc.),
6. local countryside (tourist attractions and other local treasures undiscovered by most of the tourists),
7. calendar of local cultural, social and sport events.



How to keep the volunteers and the local people motivated:

“At the beginning” – remember that it is essential to explain to the volunteers WHY their work is important to your local community (and keep reminding them during the project),

“During the project” – remember that there are many ways of non-verbal communication (for many of your neighbors, language is a big barrier, and for this reason you have to think about activities that do not require language: sport, common cooking, crafts),

“After the project” – stay in touch with the volunteers even after the workcamp, send them pictures of places where they worked, show them how these places are used now and accent the importance of their contribution.

Examples of joint activities

During the work time

An on-going workcamp has the potential of drawing the attention of the local people towards places that are normally abandoned or rarely used. If there is the demand, workcamp can be a great opportunity to begin their revival.

Here are some ideas that were successful on other workcamps in the Czech Republic:

- cleaning of the forest (collecting trash, etc.) \together with the local children and youth,
- cleaning of an abandoned garden (in the public area) together with the people living around and a following neighborhood celebration,
- joint decoration of a bus stop.

During the free time

The way of spending the free time is a very important part of the workcamp. The volunteers want to discover the country closely and they are curious about everything that the workcamp location has to offer. Some things seem ordinary to you and you would not even guess how interesting they may be for the volunteers, so try considering all the possibilities. It is also attractive if you can show the volunteers some know-how of your organization – you can for example organize a workshop, discussion, field trip, etc.

Here are some ideas that were successful on other workcamps in the Czech Republic:

- volunteers present about themselves and about their respective countries (even with food tasting) to the public/children in the local school,
- a sport match with the local people,
- “a meeting of languages” (an evening with poetry in all the different languages of the volunteers),
- writing a blog on the municipal website about the everyday life of a volunteer on a workcamp (the volunteers were writing in English and the campleaders were translating their articles into Czech),
- common cooking in local families,
- vising an organic farm nearby,
- a camp fire and roasted sausages (with the local people),
- movie night (playing a Czech movie with English subtitles),
- bike trip,
- going to a local music event,
- picnic in a nice place near the workcamp location,
- canoeing.

Suggestion:

Set aside part of the budget for free time activities of the volunteers (even if it is just for one collective trip). You can save money if you think about activities that you do not have to pay for or if you arrange for a discount on the entrance fees.

In the afternoon (after the work) you can give the volunteers a choice of two different free time activities so there is an option for those that are tired and something to do for the active participants. Do not be afraid to give some time off to the volunteers time to time.



XI. EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

To make these examples more illustrative we chose different types of workcamps. Some of the workcamps take place at the same location repeatedly and their organizers are successful in engaging the foreign and Czech volunteers together with the local public. You can find more examples of workcamps that INEX-SDA organizes in the respective season in cooperation with different organizations and municipalities on the website www.inexsda.cz/cs/workcampy or (descriptions of the particular projects are in English).

Jewish Holesov

The host: Municipal cultural center Holešov

Topic: culture

Workcamps take place in Holešov every year since 2003 – originally they were supported by the Jewish Community in Brno, later by the Municipal cultural center in Holešov. The aim of the workcamp is the maintenance of a Jewish cemetery and help with organization of a festival called *Jewish Culture Week*.

In 2015 the work activities on this workcamp included mainly:

- work on the cemetery: removing the upper layer of the ground together with the lawn, painting metal fences around the graves, installation of an exhibition and cleaning in the synagogue,
- help during the festival: transportation of chairs or sale of baked goods and badges during the concerts.

Between July and August 2015, 8 foreign volunteers and 2 Czech voluntary campleaders took part in the workcamp in Holešov. They were accommodated in the local tourist hostel Kovárna, which is maintained by the Municipal cultural center Holešov, and they did their shopping and cooking on their own. In their free time they visited for example the chateau of Kroměříž, traditional architecture in Rymice, the chateau of Holešov, a summer camp for children and events during the Festival of Jewish Culture. Two local coordinators from the Municipal cultural center Holešov took care of the workcamp.

www.holesov.info

Community life in Czech Paradise

The host: municipality of Mnichovo Hradiště

Topic: community development

The workcamp in Mnichovo Hradiště (over 8,200 inhabitants) took place in 2015 for the first time and it was supported by the local municipal council. The aim of the workcamp was to engage the volunteers in the renovation of the public space in the town and to show the local residents the values of the voluntary work.

The volunteers were helping with two main activities:

- restoration of a villa owned by the municipality which should be used in the future for accommodating the volunteers, artists and other people who wish to contribute to the revival of the town,
- reparation of a courtyard of the municipal library and creating a new outdoor space for the readers.

The workcamp took place during the last two weeks in July. Nine foreign volunteers and two Czech camp leaders took part in this project. The group lived in a villa owned by the municipality in the outskirts of the town and they were cooking for themselves (every day 2 people were marked down as cooks). Apart from the work activities mentioned above, the volunteers also took part in many activities prepared by the local residents. Some examples of these activities include cattail weaving workshop and discovering of this unique local profession, going to a concert, joint barbecue with the local community, visiting a brewery, local museum and Škoda Museum, visit of the home for the elderly, a bike trip or a yoga class. Many local people actively participated in the organization of this workcamp.

www.mnhradiste.cz

Castle Grabštejn

The host: National Historical Institution (State Castle Grabštejn Administration)

Topic: renovation of historical sites

The workcamps take place in the Grabštejn castle every year since 2003 in cooperation with the National Historical Institution. The aim of these workcamps is to help with the maintenance and smaller construction works in the castle and adjoining park that are needed at the moment.

In the past years the volunteers (under technical supervision) contributed for example to the following tasks:

- elimination and burning of invasive plants in the park of the castle,
- sanding down windows and renewing the paint,
- building a metaled access path to the elevator for wheelchair bound people in the back of the castle,
- construction of a tampered clay floor in the castle cellar,
- cutting wood, cleaning inside of the castle.

In 2015, 10 foreign volunteers and 2 Czech camp leaders were helping in the castle. The participants lived directly in the castle – they slept in one of the rooms on provided beds in their own sleeping bags. They had a small kitchen at their disposal, together with a common room and a fire place outside. The volunteers were doing the shopping themselves from the provided budget and they were cooking as well. In their free time the volunteers visited two castles, they went for a trip to Liberec where they experienced the science and technology center iQLANDIE, they saw the Czech-Polish-German tripoint and organized an international dinner. The castellan of Grabštejn castle and the castle serviceman were both engaged in the workcamp.

www.hrad-grabstejn.cz

Fight social exclusion

The host: People in Need Czech Republic, charitable trust

(the branch office in Ústí nad Labem)

Topic: social services

The first workcamp in Ústí nad Labem, in cooperation with the local branch office of People in Need Czech Republic, took place in 2000. At that time the volunteers were working in the Matiční Street, but since then the workcamp has moved to other excluded locations in the city. The aim of the 2015 workcamp was to provide meaningful free time activities for the children and youth in the excluded locations, to eliminate the risks caused by spending the time in the streets, to make friends with foreign volunteers and to organize street art activities in the industrial quarter of the city.

Among others, the volunteers devoted their time to the following activities:

- preparation and carrying out of a fun day for children from Předlice and Mojžíř area,
- help with program preparation and with organization of a music festival,
- decorating the local public areas together with the children – street art activities in the location of the workcamp,
- preparation and carrying out of an adventurous night walk for the children from the excluded communities.

In 2015, 8 volunteers from abroad and 2 Czech campleaders came to join the workcamp. They lived together in the newly renovated quarters of the local branch office of People in Need Czech Republic (there was an attic sleeping room, a kitchen and a dining room at their disposal). The group did the shopping and cooking on their own. The volunteers were acquainted with the social services in the Czech Republic, with the work of People in Need, with the system of social benefits and with the issue of social exclusion. As for the free time activities, there was a field trip for the volunteers to a nearby goat farm where they stayed overnight. They also went swimming in Milada Lake and tasted traditional Czech cuisine. One worker from the local branch office of People in Need Czech Republic in Ústí nad Labem was in charge of the workcamp.

www.clovekvtisni.cz

New Forest

The host: Čmelák: Friends of Nature Society

Topic: ecology

The first workcamp in Jizera Mountains organized in cooperation with the non-profit organization Čmelák took place in 2005. In 2015 it was already the 12th workcamp of this organization and it focused on the intercultural meeting of young people that learnt to carry out different types of work in the nature (in the forest, in the wetlands, in the meadows or at a creek). The aim of these activities was to promote the development of landscape biodiversity.

Some examples of the tasks completed on this workcamp are:

- debarking of the tree trunks (serves against the spread of harmful pest),
- construction of an enclosure to protect the tree seedlings against the wildlife,
- reaping of a meadow and raking of the grass,
- construction of a wooden enclosure for gathering and composting of the cut grass,
- maintenance of the banks and the stream-bed of a creek, plugging cattail,
- finishing a hide-out for snakes and lizards, removing the invasive plant Fallopia japonica and picking up trash.

Altogether there were 14 foreign and Czech volunteers and 2 campleaders on the workcamp. During the first week the group lived in the presbytery in Vratislavice nad Nisou, during the second week they moved to the presbytery in Jítrava. In both cases the group could use a kitchen where the volunteers cooked for themselves. A community event called International Breakfast in the presbytery was organized as a part of the workcamp. About 25 local people participated in this event. Other educational and free time activities include for example: a field trip with an environmental theme, media seminar, ice hockey match, visit of the local ZOO and a tearoom. One coordinator from the Čmelák association was responsible for the workcamp.

www.cmelak.cz

Discover and enrich the life of Mezno

The host: association Mezeňák together with Mezno municipality

Topic: education

It was already the 7th workcamp that took place in Mezno in 2015. The workcamps in Mezno are organized by the local association Mezeňák and supported by the Mezno municipality. The aim of this association is to promote the sense of community in the inhabitants and to improve the relationship of the local people towards their municipality. To achieve this goal they want to engage the inhabitants in activities related to the social life in their village, cultural events and free time activities. The aim of the workcamp is to help them achieve their objective.

The volunteers worked mainly at the following tasks:

- presentations about the home countries of the volunteers and about volunteering in general for children and adults in the schools and pubs (the aim of these presentations was to point out how important it is to learn English and to dilute the fear of foreigners the local people had). Tasting the different national cuisines was part of the presentations.
- preparation and carrying out of a fun day for children,
- writing a blog about the workcamp (the campleaders had to translate everything to Czech)
- a final project of the volunteers – creating a map of places which they visited, making a dictionary of the basic terms in all the languages of the participants, presenting pictures and a short video made during the workcamp.

Seven volunteers and two Czech campleaders took part in this workcamp. The group lived in a building on the football field. It was equipped with cubicles for sleeping, a cafeteria, toilets and showers. There were mattresses provided but the volunteers had to use their own sleeping bags. The volunteers were preparing breakfasts and dinners themselves and during the week the lunch was provided for them in the schools or in a local restaurant. There were several educational and free time activities prepared for the volunteers, for example workshop focused on consumption and water, a lecture on the history of the town and the Konopiště castle, they learnt to cook some typical Czech meals. One local coordinator from the association Mezeňák was responsible for the workcamp.

www.mezenak.mezno.cz



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Notes:

WWW.INEXSDA.CZ



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