**Volunteering in Netherlands**

In Wageningen there are many ways in/at which you can do voluntary work. For example the Twinning Foundation Wageningen Gödöllő is a Foundation at which only volunteers work.

There is a special organisation in Wageningen, where you can subscribe as a volunteer; more information, see: [www.vrijwilligwageningen.nl](http://www.vrijwilligwageningen.nl)

Volunteering was generally considered an activity to improve the well-being of others without any remuneration. It used to be thought of as being rooted in a positive attitude: working because you want to and not because you have to. It has now been expanded to a process of learning and developing. It takes many forms, and can be performed by a wide range of people in many areas, while giving the feeling of satisfaction that comes from giving back to a community, being helpful, being busy, meeting new people and developing skills. There are many interesting volunteering positions, you can apply for in the Netherlands through different organisations.

**The Vrijwilligers Centrale Amsterdam**(Volunteer Centre Amsterdam)   
The Vrijwilligers Centrale Amsterdam (VCA) is a city-wide organization that assists individuals in finding volunteer work, supports and advises voluntary organizations and promotes volunteer work in Amsterdam.   
  
**Our Vacaturebank**   
The VCA brings people in contact with volunteer organizations who need volunteers for all kinds of different purposes. Volunteers can search through almost two thousand volunteering opportunities via the online [Vacaturebank, or vacancy database](http://vrijwilligersnetwerk.nu/pages/searchvac.aspx).  
  
**For more information about volunteer work in Amsterdam:**Download our information sheet [Volunteer work in Amsterdam](http://www.vca.nu/download/Voluntary%20work%20Amsterdam.pdf).   
Download the folder [Residence in the Netherlands](http://www.vca.nu/download/Residence%20in%20the%20Netherlands.pdf).

**Just do it – Becoming a volunteer**

If you’re down with Dutch, register to become a volunteer online at <http://www.vrijwilligwageningen.nl>

WEB: <http://www.access-nl.org/living-in-the-netherlands/working/volunteering.aspx>

**Why volunteer?**

The benefits of volunteering are in numerous. Some of them are:

* Opening your mind: You get a wider perspective on things, become more compassionate and become aware of problems in our society.
* Feeling good: You feel better when you help improve life for others and accomplish something. Volunteering can even help you strengthen and protect your mental and physical health.
* Meeting people: A platform for socialising and developing friendships.
* Gaining experience: It helps develop and improve skills such as teamwork, communication, being organised, etc. Volunteering can also help you learn more about your field of interest.
* Getting busy: For the unemployed, under-employed or people looking for job opportunities, having a volunteer position help pass the time.

**Tips to narrow down volunteering options**

The main popular volunteering areas are:

* Community development

This encompasses volunteer work that aims to improve infrastructure and services like sanitation, water, permanent shelter, electricity, schools, gardening, reliable roads, and more.

* Environment & wildlife

These are the services directed towards environmental and wildlife management. They can involve environmental monitoring, re-vegetation, weed removal and several other ecological restoration related processes. Raising awareness about the environment also falls under the same category.

* Schools or education

Volunteering in schools may involve helping underprivileged children and adults to develop life-changing skills (like learning English, which can significantly improve the prospects of people living in developing countries), being a classroom helper, helping with fundraising efforts, etc. You can also participate in fun activities like drama productions, one-off events and chaperoning on field trips.

**Other areas where volunteers are utilised**

* Community theatres, museums and monuments
* Libraries or senior help centres
* Clubs and organisations like school clubs, youth organisations, rotary clubs, sports clubs
* Restoration activities for parks, and other public spaces
* Places of worship

NB: Volunteering can be done within an organisation, out in the field and from home, with tasks such as writing, graphic designing, emailing and social media.

**Statistics**

In 2010, **a survey revealed that the Netherlands has the highest percentage of volunteers in the world.** More than one in five people work as volunteer; a number which has been growing during the past decade. Volunteers spend an average of five hours a week on unpaid activities.

**Volunteering in the Netherlands**

For general information on volunteering in Netherlands, you can contact the national Dutch volunteer office on its hotline, (0900 899 8600, €0.20 per min.)  and check the daily papers for ads regarding volunteering opportunities.

Below are only some of the volunteering positions available to those looking to get involved.

* [ACCESS](http://www.access-nl.org/about-access/how-we-do-it/helping-access.aspx)

Of course, volunteering for ACCESS means supporting the international community in the Netherlands and is a rewarding way of using your existing skills and adding to your experience during your stay in the country.

* [Children's International Summer Villages](http://www.cisv.nl)

Within this organisation you can become active in the Junior Branch. It arranges JB-weekends and helps organise the summer and winter camps.

* [Humanitas](http://www.humanitas.nl/)

This organisation has a large variety of positions for volunteers, which are supported by around 300 paid staff. Humanitas has nearly 600 projects and activities in five different areas: parents and children, community, loneliness and isolation, active aging, and grief and loss. (in Dutch)

* [Joho Company](http://www.joho.nl/internat/index.html)

Offers a lot of information and services, including voluntary work, and has easy communication channels.

* [Plan Netherlands](http://www.plannederland.nl)

Plan in the Netherlands is a member of Plan International, an global, humanitarian, child-centred development organisation. It seeks to provide help for children in developing countries. Plan works worldwide for the rights of children and ensuring compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. (in Dutch)

* [Volunteers in The Hague](http://www.hofnet.nl)

This website presents useful information on voluntary work in The Hague (in Dutch)

* [Volunteer Square](http://www.vrijwilligerswerk.nl)

Search through the vacancies for volunteers. It is the site for anyone looking to volunteer or work with volunteers.

* [Greenpeace](http://www.greenpeace.nl/contactus/)

Greenpeace does scientific research on environmental problems, talks with companies and politicians with the right facts, analysis and feasible solutions; and takes relevant action in case of negligence from the concerned parties. Greenpeace requires volunteers for campaigning, providing information at events or support questions to the audience for their campaigns.

**More volunteering information and opportunities in the Netherlands**

* [Friends of the Earth](http://www.foei.org/): a national organisation dedicated to environmental issues.
* [Amnesty International](http://www.amnesty.nl/): focuses on humanity and human rights. (in Dutch)
* [Markt](http://www.markt.nl/en/c/Sports-Leisure/Volunteer-work): offers a list of volunteer opportunities from various organisations across the Netherlands.
* [Laluz](http://www.stichtinglaluz.nl/): a volunteer organisation aimed specifically at helping young professionals aged 25 to 40 share their expertise on a voluntary basis. (in Dutch)
* [Stichting Hip](http://www.stichtinghip.nl/): a communication network offering volunteers suitable positions. (in Dutch)
* [World Wide Volunteering](http://www.worldwidevolunteering.org.uk/): a database covering 1000 voluntary organisations in 214 countries around the world.
* [Amsterdam Cares](http://www.amsterdamcares.nl/): an Amsterdam-based organisation specialising in flexible voluntary work.
* [De Slinger](http://www.deslinger.nu/): a volunteer organisation focused on helping people to become more involved in the community. (in Dutch)
* [Stichting Present](http://www.stichtingpresent.nl/amsterdam/cm/2073/english): an organisation that brings volunteers in contact with people who require assistance.
* [Go Abroad](http://www.goabroad.com/volunteer-abroad): the global directory for volunteer positions.
* [Go Abroad, Netherlands section](http://www.goabroad.com/volunteer-abroad/search/netherlands/volunteer-abroad-1): the directory for (un)paid jobs in the Netherlands.
* [Go Abroad, TEFL section](http://www.goabroad.com/providers/i-to-i-tefl-courses-tefl-jobs-abroad/programs/volunteer-abroad-with-an-online-tefl-course-86871): the directory for TEFL (English teaching) courses in the Netherlands.
* [Idealist](http://www.idealist.org): for volunteer openings both in the Netherlands and worldwide.
* [**Expatriate Archive Centre**](http://www.xpatarchive.com): an organisation which archives expat experiences.

Volunteering possibility: <http://www.movisie.com/volunteering>