

1. OUR ORGANISATION.

Why Not? is a not for profit NGO coming into its 5th year of operation. The organization is a platform that brings everyone together to share ideas and interact with each other. We promote holistic health, ecological awareness, sustainability, and education in progressive ideals. We aim to bring members of the community together to demonstrate how our beliefs can create positive effects in an alternative and sustainable living. We do this by holding public seminars and workshops in all our core practices. We target all age groups, from 5 years of age to the elderly.

Why Not? activities revolve around the Why Not? Centre located in urban St Julian's, and the Why Not? Creativity Vortex, located in rural Mgarr, both open to everyone.

Why Not? Centre (St Julians)

Activities:

- Weekly organisation of meditation, yoga, talks and discussion events (open to all age groups).
- A place to discover all similar agenda events around Malta through a free public notice area.
- Holistic Therapy room for therapists to practice Holistic Health.
- A chill out area where people can have tea and work in a relaxing and welcoming environment.
- A market platform for ethical and fairtrade local and international goods which serves as a platform for local craftspeople.

Why Not? Creativity Vortex (Mgarr)

Activities:

The Creativity Vortex Impact Centre is an ecological and sustainable project located on a 12 acre property in rural Mgarr on privately owned land.

The land is home to "Vincent's Eco Farm", where the main produce includes olive oil and wine, alongside sustainably grown fruit and vegetables. The purpose and function of Creativity Vortex Impact Centre is to provide an opportunity for people to spend more time surrounded by nature, promote environmental awareness, sustainability, and to inspire people lead a more positive lifestyle as well as to learn how to grow their own food.

Volunteers work on a rotation basis, a maximum of 5 volunteers being present at any time. The Volunteers contribute to community projects, work on the land, are involved in farming and maintenance of the project, and participate in workshops and holistic activities.

For the past 2 years the Vortex has hosted over 100 volunteers from all corners of the globe. The main aim of the vortex is to provide free access to engagement with practical sustainable living, maximising the potential of land resources, and being one with nature.

Events:

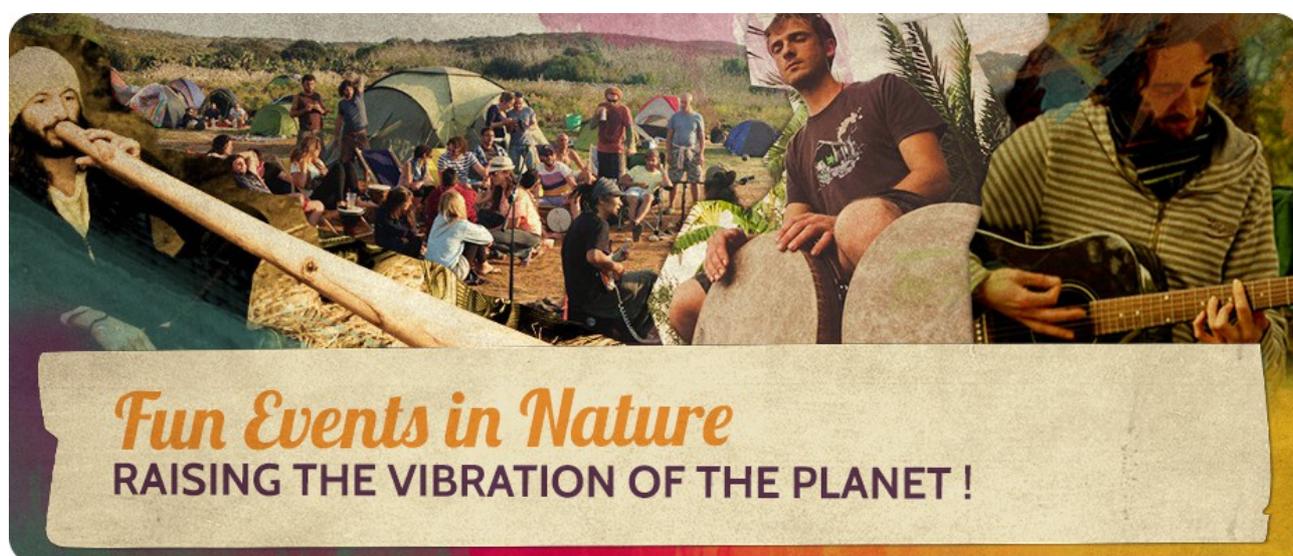
- Hosting of school visits on a monthly basis (engaging all education Institutions around Malta). Over the past year, over 100 school groups have visited the Vortex. Through these visits schoolchildren enjoy themselves, learn outside their normal class environment, and gain invaluable environmental awareness through a hands-on experience
- Open community vegetable and fruit growing area
- Environmental workshops and projects, e.g on tree planting, composting
- Team building workshops
- Community volunteer days that encourage the input of anyone interested in experiencing nature in a unique way

As an organisation we have been hosting volunteers for the past 5 years and are therefore experienced in planning an interesting timetable of activities for volunteers, troubleshooting any problems, as well as mentoring and supporting them. We look forward to hosting volunteers as this serves to keep a fresh flow of ideas and perspectives going within the organisation and also an opportunity to make new contacts abroad.

Why Not? is already well-experienced in hosting volunteers, both local and international. All projects and events by Why Not? are possible thanks to several volunteers dedicating their time and commitment. We believe that we are able to provide the volunteers participating in this Erasmus+ project with a unique experience abroad, that will give them a complete experience of a new country, the opportunity to learn new skills, and be part of a team.

All initiatives related to Why Not? depend on volunteers, and we are willing to provide support and encourage all volunteers to participate in our activities. Through the spaces and sites we run, the experience we have, and the activities we implement we provide a vast array of opportunities to volunteers. We have already grown and progressed a lot throughout the last 5 years, and we are looking forward to continue to improve the quality of the projects we implement and the events we host or participate in.

Through the NGO's Impact Center in the middle of Zebbiegħ Valley (Mgarr) we provide an open space where individuals can connect with nature, and practice community building through music, art, conscious education & healing. The space benefits those who wish to organize events, workshops, retreats, hold talks, meditate, practice yoga and embrace creativity. It is one of the ways in which volunteers will be interacting with the local community.



2. OUR PROJECT.

The project's main aim is to raise more environmental awareness, which is one of the core goals of our organisation. We believe that it is very important for European youths to be more aware of themselves, their environment and the importance of sustainability in all our actions.

We aim to promote a more sustainable way of living with the individuals who collaborate with us, and help them identify their mission in European society. We want to spread awareness that in order to have a healthy society on a collective basis, it is imperative for people to be healthy on an

individual level.

This project will educate and equip young individuals in the context of sustaining a healthy environment for the greater good of our planet, as well as inform them about nutrition and healthier ways to eat.

The eco-friendly life style we promote with our partners can create a learning environment, on both an intellectual and experiential level, through which youths can understand how nature operates and how we can work with nature in order to live healthier, happier lives. The volunteers will be immersed in this environmentally responsible lifestyle, even if in a largely urban environment such as Malta. The principles they will practice and learn during their experience will consequently be promoted and disseminated back home with their family and friends.

This project is compatible with Erasmus+ objectives because, among others, volunteers will experience personal growth through informal learning, wherein volunteers will be learning by doing. Volunteers will experience first hand the day to day work of our organisation, how we plan and implement projects, how we host foreign participants and how we encourage sustainable living through various activities and projects.

The activities planned for them are hands-on and require teamwork, skills that will enhance the participants' employability. The work carried out during the project will be recorded and will also be included in the certificates presented to the volunteers upon completion of the project. This will serve as recognition of the skills acquired.

The project promotes intercultural dialogue and awareness, as the participants will be working closely with other European volunteers and will be hosted in a foreign country. They will improve their linguistic and cultural awareness while participating in enjoyable activities. Our message and the aim of the activities is for people to be more responsible towards each other and our planet, thereby encouraging the volunteers to be more active members of society.

Why Not? is experienced in working with and hosting volunteers, therefore we have the full capacity to support and assist our volunteers. The daily evaluation sessions undertaken with the volunteers will also be a good time for the volunteers to reflect on anything and express themselves about anything they would like improved. A member of the Why Not? team will always be present for these evaluation sessions and will take this feedback on board and discuss with the Project Coordinator if necessary.

The volunteers will be working at 2 main sites throughout the project:

1. The Creativity Vortex Impact Centre, on Vincent's Eco-Farm (in Mgarr) - a 12 hectare farm comprising a private cabin.

2. The Why Not? Centre at St Julians

The main objective of the project is to promote an alternative way of living within a sustainable environment. Our target groups are the local community as well as the volunteers themselves. We are planning to organize activities that intrinsically lead to inter-cultural youth communication, sharing of knowledge on eco-communities, gaining skills, promoting a healthy way of living, teamwork and building relationships.

The core values of the project will be communicated through the activities and the interaction with us as an NGO. The input of the volunteers will not only help us spread our message locally, but also

abroad by teaching important skills to the volunteers, who will carry this knowledge with them and apply it in their daily lives.

The majority of the activities the volunteers will participate in revolve around environmental responsibility and living a healthy life. We will organize natural food production activities which demonstrate our goals as regards local sustainable food. We will source the food from the farm which is maintained by the volunteers, share knowledge on how to grow plants, how to maintain land in an ecologically aware manner, and how to harvest the fruits of this labour in an environmentally friendly way.

In the case of these volunteer who would like to live in the Creativity Vortex, they will be living on the farm's private cabin which is equipped with environmentally friendly amenities such as a composting toilet. This lifestyle will be complemented by in depth learning about permaculture, harvesting, growing food, maintaining an eco-farm, landscaping, witnessing and participating in eco-friendly structural projects, etc.

Food preparation is another main activity at the farm for volunteers. This will include learning about nutrition, food safety and preparation, and working as a team to make healthy meals to share. This is in line with our beliefs about contemporary food practices, and how important it is to make time to nourish our bodies as well as to share food with those around us.

Children's workshops are also held regularly at the vortex. These offer a chance to share information about nutrition, food production techniques, land management, promoting these ideas to the next generation so they can grow up aware of how to live more in tune with nature.

Building a community and team spirit is important. The volunteers will work closely with us and become part of our team. Several times each week, the volunteers will have "Participating in Why Not? activities & helping out" sessions where they will have the opportunity to participate in our organisation's everyday activities.

They will help us in the organisation and setting up of such activities, but also enjoy the results of their work by being invited to participate in such workshops, events, school visits, or other activities as the case may be. Our activities vary from intimate workshops to public events attracting hundreds of people - making the volunteers' stay with us as interesting as possible.

Other activities to be implemented include:

- Building natural structures, sharing methods and techniques that complement our sustainable ideas;
- Nature appreciation walks to see the beauty and fragility of nature;
- Festival Awareness Events to spread the ideas of our project;
- Meditation, yoga and other holistic health activities to provide an opportunity to harmonise mind, body and soul as we believe this to be a integral part of living.

Informal active education provides a highly accessible way to share knowledge of our alternate way of living and this project utilizes this educational style to communicate the basic elements of the above listed topics.

We are also planning to organize activities regarding inter-cultural youth communication and share knowledge regarding: eco – communities and environments; healthy ways of living; building consciously connected groups; and working with body, heart and mind.

3.EVS IN WHY NOT

We will be hosting 5 volunteers for this project from Italy, Poland and Spain. This project is for 12 month starting in the beginning of March 2016.

Every EVS volunteer will be supported by WHY NOT and their mentor in the adaptation phase, getting to know everything and becoming involved in the local community, also beside their EVS projects, meeting new people, making friends and acclimatization. Furthermore everybody will try to create a friendly atmosphere so that you will feel comfortable and nice here.

3.1. Selection Criteria

The volunteers' selection should take into consideration the following criteria:

- If possible between 20 and 30 years old;
- Gender balance;
- With different backgrounds (including fewer opportunities);
- Competences and interests: Most of our tasks will be connected with environmental education and sustainable lifestyle so it is very welcome, if volunteer have interest in wildlife, ecology, agriculture, health, sustainability.

3.2. Time schedule:

- 5 days per week, max. 35 hours per week
- example of schedule of work from 9:30 – 17:30 (including the lunch break) but time schedule can be flexible according , preferences and interests of volunteer, in order to help them in process of self development. Program and activities which can be moved to evenings or weekends (up to the common agreement between volunteer and WHY NOT)

3.3. Activities:

*Draft of the activities (always finalized with the volunteers to be in line with their needs, competences and interest)

Activities in the Creativity Vortex:

- Growing food: here volunteers will learn the process of seed planting. Main activities will be:
 - Planting seeds
 - Composting
 - Irrigation
 - Harvesting food
 - Harvesting seeds
 - Land regeneration

➤ How to take care of an eco centre: volunteers will learn about the different natural builds that have taken place, and will take an active role in their development, and the development of future eco projects. Main activities will be:

- Natural building
- Structure repair
- Preparing the space for upcoming events and school visits.
- Participation in events and school visits.

➤ Tree planting campaign: project for reforestation and tree planting. Main activities:

- Repotting baby trees
- Planting new ones
- Caring for the older ones (mulching) and preparing natural fertilizers
- Watering them and maintaining the Irrigation systems
- Contacting other NGOs and local councils for collaborative opportunities.

Activities at WHY NOT Center: here the volunteer will learn and participate in the main activities:

- Meeting people
- Work in the why not shop
- Help with the development of the NGO: Project researches, EU fund application
- Manage social media: blog, facebook page, website.
- Working in their youthpass certification
- Planning, preparation and help with the events

3.4. Practical arrangements for volunteers:

- **Accommodation.**

Volunteers will be hosted at the Creativity Vortex private cabin or in an apartment near within walking distance where they will be asked to conduct the majority of their volunteer work. We will offer to the volunteers the option to stay in both. So they can choose the option that will be more beneficial to their experience. The location is covered by our insurance policy. All participants will also be covered by the Group Insurance provided by the European Commission.

- **Pocket money.**

The amount of pocket money is fixed by the rules of European voluntary service as part of the Erasmus+ Programme.

- **Language.**

Will be provided access to online course to help improve their English and we can provide English lesson in case the volunteers need, through some volunteer of our organization

- **Travel arrangement.**

We will organise and cover the costs of all travel of accepted volunteers, including flights, airport pick-up/drop-off, as well as any travel within the country itself. All volunteers will come from within the EU, therefore there are no visa requirements.

The arrival of the volunteers will be agreed with the organisation, volunteers can be collected by WHY NOT or arrive to city with full instructions.

- **Mentoring and support**

Each volunteer will be supported by the core team of Why Not? and will have a personal mentor assigned to them on arrival for the duration of their stay in Malta. Volunteers have the option of choosing whether they prefer a mentor of the same gender. The mentors will be specially assigned to mentor the volunteers for the duration of the project, to avoid any conflict of interest. The mentors will also be experienced in mentoring volunteers due to our previous volunteer-hosting. In the unlikely event that a volunteer would like to have another mentor for personal reasons or reasons of conflict, we will make sure this is done discreetly and with no repercussions on the volunteer involved.



Pictures from the Creativity Vortex :)