

European Solidarity Corps Volunteering at Grenzenlos (Vienna, Austria)

“Grenzenlos without Barriers”

exclusively available for youngsters with disabilities (age 18-30)

What is Grenzenlos?

Grenzenlos is a **non-profit** and **non-governmental organisation**, which main aim is to promote peace and tolerance through **international non-formal education programs** that combine cultural integration with engagement in non-profit initiatives worldwide.

Grenzenlos is part of the international youth exchange network (the ICYE Federation). It was founded in 1949 as a pacifist programme standing for tolerance and reconciliation between different cultures.

Our office is in the 9th district of **Vienna** (Austria) where currently 13 employees (paid staff members) are working. Many people (volunteers, voluntary co-workers, Austrians as well as internationals, young people interested in our exchange offers, etc.) visit our office on a regular basis which makes the office a lively place to work for a volunteer, with many opportunities to meet new people.

Grenzenlos has **over 75 years of experience working with volunteering programs**. Within the European Solidarity Corps Grenzenlos has a lot of experience as **sending, coordinating, and hosting organisation**. We have already hosted many volunteers at our office over the past years, usually 1 ESC volunteer per year.

In our work we have often experienced that the possibilities for youngsters with disability or otherwise disadvantaged youngsters to be included and integrated into voluntary services are often limited. There are usually not a lot of volunteering projects available for youngsters with disabilities or not enough resources to support them adequately. Grenzenlos therefore exclusively hosts ESC volunteers with disabilities to offer an international volunteering experience to the otherwise disadvantaged youngsters and to counteract this inequality.

Profile of the volunteer

To be an ESC volunteer at Grenzenlos, you do not need any special previous experiences, no previous work experience, no specific competences, and no specific language skills. Having a basic level of English or German are of advantage but not a must.

HOWEVER “Grenzenlos Without Barriers” is **only available for youngsters with a disability**, who are between 18 and 30 years old and live in an ESC program or partner country.

We usually “tailor” the ESC project to the profile of each volunteer, which means that we adapt the work fields and tasks to the interests, skills, and abilities of each volunteer. Therefore, there is no “standard profile” for volunteers that we host.

What is important to us, is that you are **motivated** to learn more about our work and to support our organisation. You should also be **open to new experiences**, willing to

try new things and to challenge your personal limits. You should also be motivated to improve your language and communication skills and be ready to show **initiative**.

Proposed activities for the ESC volunteer

As a volunteer at the Grenzenlos office, you will learn

- ✓ about working in an non-profit NGO,
- ✓ about international youth exchanges and voluntary services, and
- ✓ about a number of different international initiatives, projects, and programs
- ✓ about office work in a small non-profit organization
- ✓ about our inclusion strategies, and you can also contribute to improve and expand them: your expertise could be used to adapt and improve our projects/ programs/ activities/ etc. to the needs and capacities of volunteers.

As every volunteer has different abilities, varying interests, skills, and different support needs, every volunteering project at Grenzenlos is different. The specific tasks and fields of action of the volunteer will be tailored to your skills, interests, and abilities. Let us know what activities you enjoy doing and what you would wish to do during your volunteering at Grenzenlos!

Generally, a main part of the project, especially in the beginning will be working in our office and supporting the team with their daily tasks. Through that you will have the opportunity to try out several different tasks and activities in relation to our daily work and to get to know our programs, events, and projects better. You will gain an insight into our working methods and work structure.

Additionally, part of your activity could for example be to gather information, do research, visit organisations, speak to other volunteers and compose results of your research as resource material for future exchanges. Grenzenlos' projects focus on including and fostering the engagement of people with disability in all our programs. This means that there is a constant need of knowledge, and expertise which a volunteer with disabilities could contribute: for example, as a peer-volunteer for volunteers with and without disabilities.

Your tasks could also be to support us in making our work more visible, supporting our marketing and communications strategies, working with social media, doing photo and video work, supporting our fairs and info-events, creating promotional material, reporting about your own volunteering experience, making accessibility checks of our offline and online materials, etc.

Depending on the time of the year you will be with us, there might also be the possibility that you join our special events and current activities of the seasons. For example, during summer you could join the short-term international volunteering projects. These projects are team volunteering programs and have a focus on the integration of both national and international youngsters with fewer opportunities, including youngsters with disability. As the volunteer at Grenzenlos you can help the team preparing and organising the activities for the short-term projects as well as participating in them.

Throughout your volunteering you will have the opportunity to take initiative, bring in your ideas and develop your own projects, if you'd like. Grenzenlos will guide and support you with the implementation of your ideas.

Application and recruitment process

If you would like to apply for our ESC volunteering project "Grenzenlos without barriers", **please send your "Melange application form"** (fully filled in), **CV** (curriculum vitae), **motivation letter via e-mail to application@melange.wien**.

Please make sure to submit all requested documents before the application deadline and

that you indicate the details of your supporting (sending) organization.

You can find more information about our ESC vacancies and the application procedure on our website: www.melange.wien/en

In general, all available placements of Grenzenlos ESC projects are open to everyone (fulfilling the general ESC criteria). However, in the selection procedure a preference is shown for candidates with fewer opportunities and for the project "Grenzenlos without barriers" exclusively applications of youngsters with disability will be considered.

More information and impressions about Grenzenlos:

You can find more information about Grenzenlos and our work on our **websites:**

For general information about Grenzenlos: www.grenzenlos.or.at

For information about ESC volunteering in Vienna: www.melange.wien

For information about all our volunteering programs: www.volunteering.at

Social Media:

www.facebook.com/grenzenlos.volunteering

www.instagram.com/grenzenlos.volunteering/

Reports:

Check out the [reports](#) of former ESC volunteers in Vienna to get a better impression of ESC projects in Vienna. We in particular recommend to check the reports of previous youngsters volunteering at Grenzenlos:

- [volunteer report](#) and the [TikTok account](#) created by Tatia from Georgia (volunteer at Grenzenlos in 2023)
- [blog of Susanna](#) from Finland (volunteer at Grenzenlos in 2020/2021)
- [Esin](#) from Turkey (2019)
- [Maria](#) from Greece (2017)
- [Benjamin](#) (2016)