

# Basics of volunteering

Development experts, Volunteer activities  
City of Helsinki, Culture and Leisure Division

Helsinki

A person with blonde hair tied back, wearing a patterned jacket, is seen from the side, looking out towards a bright sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow that fills the background. The person's hand is raised near their head, possibly shielding their eyes from the bright light.

**“One Hel of an impact” is not just a slogan.  
It is an attitude that challenges us to think  
big.**

# Programme:

- What does volunteering mean and what values guide the activities?
- Rights and obligations
- Insurance and agreement
- Examples of volunteer activities
- Interpersonal skills in volunteer activities

# What does volunteering mean and what values guide the activities?

# Definition of volunteer activities, City of Helsinki

*Volunteering refers to unpaid activities performed by individuals for the good of individual people, the environment or communities, based on their own free will and motivation. Volunteering promotes participation and living a good life.*

# Values of the City of Helsinki

## The City's values are:

- Resident orientation
- Ecology
- Fairness and equality
- Economic responsibility
- Safety
- Participation
- Business-friendliness

## Ethical principles

The City emphasises honesty, fairness, equality and openness in all of its activities.

# Helsinki's principles of participation

1. Utilisation of the know-how and expertise of individuals and communities
2. Facilitating of independent activities
3. Creation of equal opportunities for participation

(Administrative Regulations, approved by the City Council on 16 November 2016)



# Volunteering as a participation facilitator

- Volunteering is one of the factors that facilitate participation and involvement. Initially, volunteering was born out of a sense of community and the human need to help each other, e.g. helping neighbours and collective work (Harju 2005: 67–72).
- Often, those involved in volunteering say it provides them with feelings of relevance, positive experiences, participation and the joy of giving and receiving (Nylund – Yeung 2005: 13).
- Volunteering is active citizenship and an important part of democracy (Haarni 2010: 33; Utriainen 2011: 21).



# The most functional city of the world – Helsinki City Strategy 2017–2021

- Helsinki's vision is to be the most functional city in the world.
- Our operations are built on equality, parity, a strong sense of community and an open operating method that facilitates participation.
- First and foremost, Helsinki is a place and a community, not a bureaucratic machine.
- The City's basic task is to provide its residents with high-quality services and create conditions for a stimulating and fun life.
- **Helsinki is for a good life!**

# Principles of volunteer activities

- Voluntariness and work without pay
- Differentiation between the roles of a volunteer and an employee
- Confidentiality and the obligation of secrecy
- Reliability and commitment
- Equality and reciprocity
- Tolerance and equality
- Participation and communality
- Relevance and agency
- Commitment to the values and the instructions and principles of volunteer activities issued by the City of Helsinki
- Commitment to instructions and to respecting those who receive help through volunteer activities
- The right to support and guidance
- The joy of activity

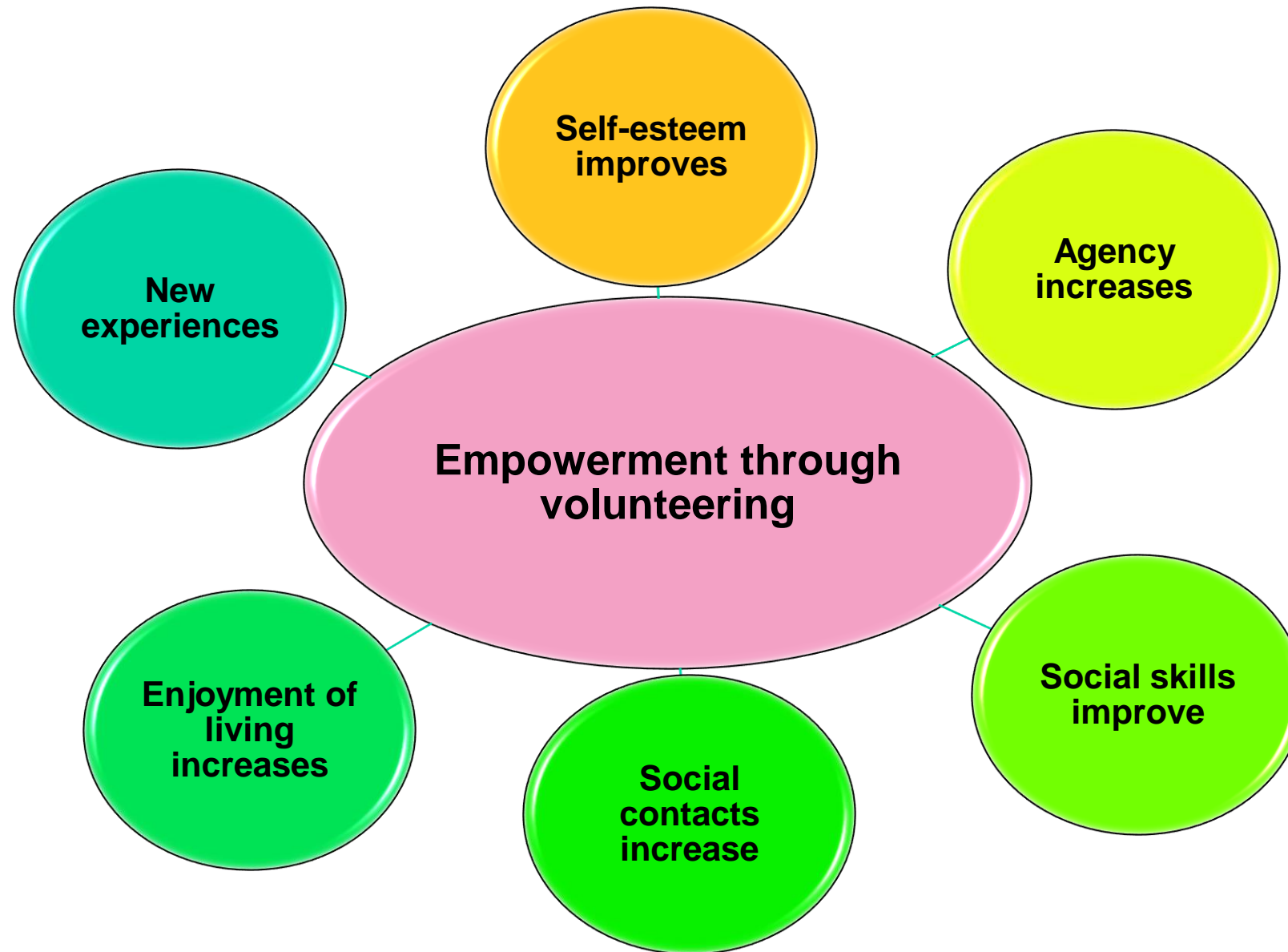
# Volunteering from the City's perspective

Activities, motivated by the volunteers' own desires, supplement the services of the City and promote

- Participation
- Opportunities to help and be helped
- Well-being and joy
- Experiences of relevance and agency
- Meetings between different residents of Helsinki on an equal ground
- A sense of community and ownership in various neighbourhoods and the city
- Caring for the environment

Volunteering also works to prevent social exclusion, empowers people and alleviates feelings of loneliness.

# Empowering volunteer activities



# Volunteering in Finland

- **More and more people are volunteering (2018 40% vs. 2015 33%)**
- **The average amount of volunteer work is approx. 15 h/month (2018)**
- 54% (2018) of people would take part in volunteer activities if asked to.
- More than half of (non-participating) respondents cited lack of time as an obstacle
- Women carry out slightly more volunteer work than men (+4% in 2018)
- Young people (ages 15–24) volunteer the most (17% more in 2018 than in 2015)
- The amount of volunteer work carried out by elderly people (ages 65–79) has decreased (-10% in 2015 vs. 2018)
- **Online and short-term volunteering keeps increasing, but 42% still carry out long-term volunteer activities and 76% carry out face-to-face volunteer activities.**

The survey was conducted as a series of personal visit interviews in March 2018. 1,000 people responded. The sample is statistically representative of the adult population of Finland (aged 15 and over).. This survey was commissioned by Kansalaisareena – Citizen Forum, the Church Council and Sivi Study Centre and conducted by Taloustutkimus Oy. The margin of error is approximately  $\pm 3$  percentage points.

# People's motives vary

- **Wanting to help**
  - **Wanting to experiment**
  - **Wanting to do things**
  - **Wanting to belong to a group**
  - Having time to spare and wanting to do something useful
  - Getting asked by an acquaintance
  - Getting to meet new people
  - Having received help previously
  - Religious conviction
  - Own hobby
  - Receiving study credits or work experience
  - etc.
- Finding a volunteer activity that suits your motivation is essential!

# Peer support – peer support also colours volunteer activities.

**To be a person to another person in everyday meetings forms the core idea of peer support.**

- Sharing experiences is important in peer support.
- There are different peer groups formed on different bases, such as groups of people belonging to the same age group.
- Peer support groups can also lead to new friendships, rather than just being forums for discussing problems. (Hyväri 2005: 214–215.)

**Belonging to a group is a basic human need.**

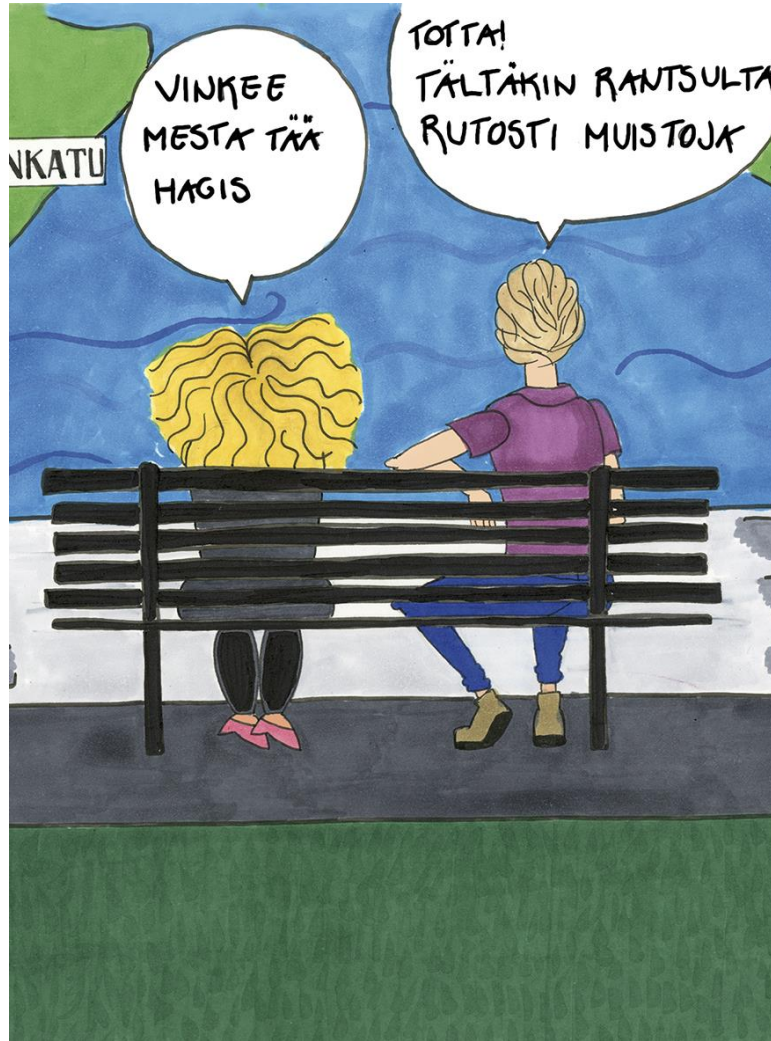
- Groups enable people to share experiences with peers. Other people's understanding and support is important.
- In fact, the feeling of belonging may be the best thing about the group for many. (Heiska – Hoikkala – Martin – Syvälahti 2012: 13).

Heiska, Hanna – Hoikkala, Marianne – Martin, Minna – Syvälahti, Anne 2012. Satoa ryhmästä – opas hyvinvointiryhmän ohjaajalle. Helsinki: Finnish Student Health Services.  
Hyväri, Susanna 2005. Vertaistuen ja ammattiauttamisen muuttuvat suhteet. In the work: Nylund, Marianne – Yeung, Anne Birgitta (ed.) 2005. Vapaaehtoistoiminta: anti, arvot ja osallisuus. Tampere: Vastapaino. 214–235.

**Helsinki**

Literature recommendation: *Vertaistuki sosiaali- ja terveysalalla* by Irja Mikkonen and Anja Saarinen.

<https://www.epressi.com/tiedotteet/kustannustoiminta/vertaistuki-sosiaali-ja-terveysalalla-on-ensimmainen-suomalainen-kattava-tietokirja-vertaistuen-merkityksesta.html> (in Finnish)



# Rights and obligations

# Volunteers have the right

## To select a suitable task themselves

- Commit for the time of their choosing
- Decline tasks offered
- Move on to other tasks

## To:

- Receive familiarisation and guidance
- Receive support and instructions
- Receive information on whom to contact in the event of problems
- Participate in training sessions and meetings
- Receive and provide feedback
- Be insured
- Receive joy and energy from volunteering

# Volunteers are obligated to:

- Commit to confidentiality
- Adhere to the values, instructions and principles of the City of Helsinki
- Act in a tolerant manner and respect everyone's right to self-determination
- Keep appointments and promises
- Volunteer, not work as an employee
- Be intoxicant-free
- Notify staff of any shortcomings, vandalism or other concerns (e.g. customer needing help or vandalism of an environmental site, etc.)
- Notify the relevant parties of wanting to stop volunteering

# Insurance and agreement

# Volunteers are insured



## KORVAUSHAKEMUS Ryhmätapaturmavakuutus

Vakuutusnumero
5273914
Käsittelytunnus

HENKILÖTIEDOT	Vakuutetun täydellinen nimi		Henkilötunnus
	Lähiosoite	Postinumero	Osoitetoimipaikka
	Puhelin kotiin	Matkapuhelin	
	Sähköpostiosoite		
VAKUUTUS-TIEDOT	Vakuutuksenottajan täydellinen nimi <b>Helsingin kaupunki</b>	Jaos	
VAKUUTUKSEN-OTTAJAN VAHVISTUS	Allekirjoitus	Osoite	
	Nimen selvennys	Postinumero ja -toimipaikka	
PANKKIYHTEYS	Henkilö tai yritys, jonka tilille korvaus maksetaan		
	Pankin ja konttorin nimi	Täydellinen tilinumero	
HUOLTAJAN YHTEYSTIEDOT	Nimi	Osoite	
	Postinumero ja -toimipaikka	Puhelinnumero	
TAPATURMA-TIEDOT	Tapaturma sattui pvm		Tapatumapaikka
	klo		
	Tapaturma sattui		
	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Oppilaitoksessa tai matkalla sinne/-sieltä</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Päiväkodissa tai matkalla sinne/-sieltä</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Luottamustoimessa tai matkalla s</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Vapaaehtoistyössä tai matkalla sinne/-sieltä</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Muualla missä ?</div>		
Miten tapaturma sattui? Kertokaa, mitä tapahtui ja miksi?			



# Insurance for volunteers

- Type: Group accident insurance by Fennia (no age limit for the insurance)
- The insurance policy is valid
  - When volunteer work is being carried out
  - On journeys related directly to these tasks
- The accident insurance covers
  - The insurance only covers medical treatment expenses incurred through **public health care**, e.g. health centre, outpatient clinic and hospital fees
  - Accident treatment expenses up to €10,000 per accident
  - Pharmaceutical expenses and reasonable travel expenses
  - Repair expenses for any glasses, hearing aids, dentures, support bandages or braces worn by the insured person and broken in an accident or the purchase costs of replacements for said devices

# What to do in the event of an accident

An accident is a sudden external event that causes a bodily injury and occurs against the insured person's will.

An accident can be:

- Muscle or tendon soreness caused by a single exertion and movement that has been treated medically within seven days
- Heat stroke, sunstroke or frostbite
- Getting bitten or kicked by an animal (e.g. a dog, a cat or a horse)
- Poisoning caused by an accidentally ingested substance

## 1. Seek treatment from public health care services

Note! If an accident causes a dental injury, the injury is not covered by the insurance if the volunteer has not **immediately** seen a dentist.

## 2. Notify the volunteer instructor of the matter

The compensation application is filled out together with the instructor. Compensation must be applied for within one year of the accident.

## 3. Keep receipts for all expenses you have paid for, as well as prescriptions

They are attached to the compensation application. The decision on compensation is sent directly to the volunteer's home.

# Volunteering agreement

- Persons participating in volunteer activities do not have an employment or service relationship with the organiser of the activities, and thus no employment agreement is made with them.
- Anyone participating in volunteer activities organised by the City of Helsinki must sign a written agreement on participating in volunteer work and thus commit to adhering to any instructions and regulations issued by the party organising the volunteer work and respecting the values of the City of Helsinki.
- Those participating in volunteer activities are not allowed to disclose any confidential information that they have received about parties such as customers, City staff and co-operation partners to unauthorised parties. The volunteer work agreement contains a confidentiality and data protection commitment which remains valid even after the volunteer activities have ended.



- The volunteer work agreement stipulates that the activities are unremunerated and informs the persons participating in volunteer activities of their rights and obligations, as well as data protection-related matters.
- The volunteer work agreement is signed by the person participating in volunteer activities and the volunteer work coordinator/instructor or other division or enterprise representative.
- Two copies of the agreement are made, one for the volunteer activity participant and one for the division or enterprise.

## VAPAAEHTOISEN HENKILÖTIEDOT

Sukunimi ja etunimet	
Lähiosoite	Postinumero ja -toimipaikka
Puhelinnumero	Sähköpostiosoite
Syntymäaika	Alle 15-v. huoltajan kirjallinen suostumus
Lasten kanssa työskentelevien rikostustien selvittäminen	
<input type="checkbox"/> Rikosrekisterinote on esitetty	<input type="checkbox"/> Rikosrekisteriotetta ei tarvitse esittää

Vapaaehtoistointaan osallistuvan henkilön tehtävät

## Vapaaehtoistointinnan periaatteet

Vastikkeettomuus	Vapaaehtoistointintaan osallistuvalla ei makseta palkkaa tai palkkiota.
Vakuutus	Vapaaehtoistointintaan Helsingin kaupungilla osallistuva henkilö on vakuutettu ryhmätapaturmavakuutuksella. Vakuutus on voimassa vapaaehtoistointinnan aikana ja jotka koskevat näihin tehtäviin välittömästi liittyvillä meno- ja paluumatkoilla. Vakuutus kattaa julkisen terveydenhuollon käyttämisestä aiheutuneet kustannukset.
Salassapito	Vapaaehtoistointintaan osallistuva sitoutuu siihen, että hän ei kerro sivullisille sellaisia salassa pidettäviä tietoja, joita hän on saanut tietoonsa vapaaehtoistointinnan aikana ja jotka koskevat mm. asiakkaita, kaupungin henkilöstöä tai yhteistyökumppaneita. Salassapitositoumus on voimassa myös vapaaehtoistointinnan päättymisen jälkeen.
Muutoksista ilmoittaminen	Vapaaehtoistointintaan liittyvistä mahdollisista muutoksista tai esteistä sekä toiminnan lopettamisesta tulee ilmoittaa vapaaehtoistointinnan koordinaattorille tai muulle viraston tai liikelaitoksen nimeämälle henkilölle.

Olen tutustunut edellä mainittuihin vapaaehtoistointinnan periaatteisiin ja annan salassapitositoumuksen sekä suostumukseni siihen, että vapaaehtoistointinnan järjestämisen kannalta olennaiset tiedoni voidaan viedä viraston tai liikelaitoksen vapaaehtoisrekisteriin.

Paikka ja päivämäärä	
Vapaaehtoisen allekirjoitus ja nimenselvennys	Vapaaehtoistointinnan järjestäjän edustajan allekirjoitus ja nimenselvennys

For those who want it, a certificate is provided regarding:

- the training
- the activities

## TODISTUS

on suorittanut Helsingin kaupungin vapaaehtoistoiminnan perusteet koulutuksen 27.2.2019. Koulutuksen kesto 2 H.

Koulutukseen kuuluivat mm. seuraavat aiheet:

- Vapaaehtoistoiminnan käytännöt
  - vakuutus, sopimus ja perehdytys tehtävään
  - Vapaaehtoistoiminnan periaatteet
  - Vapaaehtoisen oikeudet ja velvollisuudet
  - Vapaaehtoistehtävien esimerkkejä
- Vuorovaikutus ja kohtaaminen

Helsingissä 27.2.2019

Kristiina Stenman  
Vapaaehtoistoiminnan Kehittämisasiantuntija  
Helsingin kaupunki, Kulttuurin ja vapaa-ajan toimiala

# Exercise– chat with the person next to you

- What kind of things do you like?
- What kind of things do you not like?
- What are you good at?
- What motivated you to participate in this training?
- What kind of volunteer activity could you see yourself carrying out?

# Examples of volunteer activities



# City of Helsinki volunteer activities 2019

## Social Services and Health Care

- Support person and support family and family friends in temporary foster families
- Volunteers of Helsinki's residential buildings, volunteers of the Itäkatu Family Centre
  - Volunteers in disability services (day and work activities / housing units)
- Housing sponsor activities of the housing services (integrating peer activities)
  - Hospital volunteer activities
- Lobby guide volunteers at Kalasatama Health and Well-being Centre and Vuosaari Health and Well-being Centre / Family Centre
  - Peer activities of the psychiatric and substance abuse services
  - Senior Centre, Service Centre and Service House volunteers
    - Neighbourhood circles, volunteers as instructors
- Volunteer Exercise Friends, focus on elderly people living at home
  - Volunteers of informal care activity centres

## Culture and Leisure

- Culture Friend, Exercise Liaisons, Exercise Friends
- Museum grandmas and grandpas and other museum volunteers
  - Projects such as:
- Adopt a Monument, Reading Ambassadors, Migrant Youth Helsinki and At Home Today
  - Volunteers in youth work

## OTHERS

- Kymppi: Park Pals, Hut Pals, collective work
- City Executive Office: Arbitration volunteers
- Kasko: School and day care centre volunteers, Kotoklubi Kaneli volunteer activities at playgrounds and family houses
  - Others?

# What to participate in?

A few examples:

- Volunteering at a youth centre
- Volunteering at a Senior centre or a service house
- Park Pals, Hut Pals and collective work
- Reading Ambassadors
- Volunteering in support for disabled adults
- Neighbourhood circle activities
- Adopt a Monument

# Youth services

- The Youth Division is responsible for youth work and the City's youth policy
- The City of Helsinki's Youth Services offer approximately 60 youth centres and facilities, dozens of hobbies, events, weekend and holiday activities, courses, camps, international exchange programmes, possibilities to participate, support, help, and information.
- Within the Helsinki City organisation, Youth Services operate under the Culture and Leisure Division.
- The target group consists of young people between the ages of 9 and 18, with the main emphasis on 13–17-year-olds. Youth work is carried out at youth centres, special activity centres, and via projects.
- As a volunteer, you will work together with youth workers. You can participate in a Youth Centre's everyday operations on a regular basis or join events on a one-off basis. You decide how often you want to work as a volunteer!

# Volunteering at a youth centre

- Adult volunteers are generally over 18 years old, and younger volunteers are also involved in the activities.
- The volunteers work primarily at youth centres. Additionally, volunteers are involved in events and other occasions organised by Youth Services.
- Volunteer activities are based on volunteering, meaning that people participate of their own free will and the activities are not a substitute for salaried work!
- Volunteers add to the quality of the evenings and provide know-how and presence. Volunteers have the option of trying out different activities
- Volunteers are entitled and obligated to participate in familiarisation at their chosen location.
- The staff familiarise them with the house, the practices, the operations and the rules, and support the volunteers.



Digital support volunteers



Volunteers on a trip



Animal care, etc. at Fallkulla

# Volunteering at Senior centre

**Volunteers can provide seniors with joy and help at a Senior centre, a group home, a service centre, a service house, or in day activities, etc.**

## **Examples of tasks for volunteers:**

- Assistance in the dining room, outdoor activities, events or everyday chores.
- Instructing group activities, organising events, assisting motivation instructors, IT guidance, teaching Finnish to elderly immigrants
- Acting as a conversation partner and friend, reading
- Dancing, group singing, karaoke, exercise, SävelSirkku
- Trips, baking, gardening activities, visiting with a pet
- Spiritual activities

# Examples of volunteer activities



Volunteer arts and crafts instructors



Volunteer artists, musicians, performers



Instructing an exercise group at Kamppi Service Centre

# Reading Ambassadors

- Volunteer Reading Ambassadors in Helsinki support the maintenance of people's reading hobby by reading out loud for elderly people and others who need help with reading. The reading sessions take place at senior centres or service houses, for example. The Reading Ambassador tasks can be connected with the Finnish Red Cross's friend activities or the City of Helsinki's volunteer activities.
- The libraries of Helsinki provide support for the Reading Ambassador tasks. The libraries hold meetings for readers that involve tips regarding books suitable for reading out loud, passing on reading inspiration and discussions regarding questions and experiences related to reading.
- More information on the HelMet website
- Read more: [www.helmet.fi/lukulahettilas](http://www.helmet.fi/lukulahettilas) (in Finnish) or [www.helmet.fi/laskamrat](http://www.helmet.fi/laskamrat) (in Swedish)
- Contact [lukulahettilas@hel.fi](mailto:lukulahettilas@hel.fi) or ask the libraries for more information
- The City of Helsinki's volunteer trainings and other questions [Vapaaehtoistoiminta@hel.fi](mailto:Vapaaehtoistoiminta@hel.fi)

# Park Pals, Hut Pals and collective work

- One of the City's finest locations offers summer activities for active Park Pals, who can work on weekdays from 8.00 to 15.00. Volunteers can work as often as they want, e.g. once a week, but there is plenty work for every day, especially when the roses are in full bloom in July and August. A unique opportunity especially for rose lovers!
- Collective work in green areas. If you want to organise collective work in your own area and wish to have other residents join you, you can submit a notification to the voluntary work coordinator, who will add information about the work/event to the work list. If you serve as a Park Pal and want to organise shared events, litter walks or collective weeding work, you can notify the voluntary work coordinator of these as well.
- In November 2017, a hut was built in the Uutela outdoor exercise area near Skata Farm in Helsinki. The hut is open for exercisers at weekends. Volunteer Hut Pals work at the hut, lighting and maintaining a fire, chatting with exercisers and making sure that people behave appropriately in the hut and follow the hut etiquette. When possible, the hut is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 12.00 to 18.00
- Urban Environment Division voluntary work coordinator **Armi Koskela**, tel. **040 719 0824**,  
e-mail: [armi.koskela@hel.fi](mailto:armi.koskela@hel.fi) / [puistokummit@hel.fi](mailto:puistokummit@hel.fi)



Uutela hut



Image: Via Visual Hunt/Honza Soukup  
Volunteer activities with disabled people



City garden

# Volunteer activities with disabled people:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1j66FW0eQB6kUDsE0Aq0rItE3WvSCH-Ww/view>

# Voluntary work with disabled adults

- As a volunteer, you can work according to your own schedule, on a regular or one-off basis.
- Among other things, you can:
  - spend time with the customers, chatting, playing games or reading, bring joy and variety to everyday life, take part in trips and shared outdoor activities, assist in computer use or participate in the activities of different groups.



# Activity locations:

## Western Helsinki:

- Mörssärinaukio group home – Kannelmäki
- Solina group home – Pikku Huopalahti
- Tilkka group home – Pikku Huopalahti

## Eastern Helsinki:

- Rastilankallio group home – Rastila
- Service house Rudolf – Laajasalo
- Activity centre Tanhua – Kontula
- Wetteri group home – Laajasalo

## Northern Helsinki:

- Kankarepolku group home – Jakomäki
- Activity centre Polku – Malmi

## Southern Helsinki:

- Isonniitynkatu group home – Käpylä
- Kipparitalo – Kalasatama
- Pasila group home – Koskela hospital area
- Pasila activity centre – Pasila
- Ruusulankatu group home – Töölö
- Sofianlehto activity centre – Käpylä
- Suez day activity unit – Jätkäsaari
- Activity centre Cäpsä – Käpylä
- Tyynelä group home – Töölö
- Tyynelä activity centre – Töölö
- Vallila group home – Vallila
- Vallila employment and training centre – Vallila

# Neighbourhood circle activities

- **Volunteer instructors are needed for neighbourhood circles!**
- Neighbourhood circles involve group activities for people of all ages, carried out on the oldest participants' terms. Volunteers serve as instructors, using their own knowledge and skills with the support of a contact worker.
- The circles gather every week at nearby free-of-charge facilities. The contents are based on the participants' wishes. Participation is free of charge or cost-priced.
- If you want to establish a neighbourhood circle, tips and advice are available.

## Contact information:

- Eastern Helsinki: [hannele.aberg@hel.fi](mailto:hannele.aberg@hel.fi), tel. 050 376 3435
- Western Helsinki: [inka.aronen@hel.fi](mailto:inka.aronen@hel.fi), tel. 040 334 5277
- Northern Helsinki: [soile.atacocugu@hel.fi](mailto:soile.atacocugu@hel.fi), tel. 050 349 7611
- Southern Helsinki: [hanna.m.paunonen@hel.fi](mailto:hanna.m.paunonen@hel.fi), tel. 040 336 1034

# Adopt a Monument project

- **Adopt a Monument** is voluntary work focusing on maintaining and nurturing old buildings and archaeological sites.
- Maintaining an adopted site is based on an agreement between the museum and the adopter group. The adopting party can be an association or a school, for example. The maintenance operations are carried out in accordance with a maintenance plan created by the City Museum. The plan contains practical instructions. Vegetation removal and trimming improve the sites' conservation, visibility and accessibility, making it possible for other people to enjoy them.
- The maintenance operations offer pleasant group activities, healthy outdoor activities and the chance to maintain the local environment that is important to the individual.
- Work carried out by volunteers for the cultural environment is very important, as the maintenance work carried out by authorities is not enough to secure the preservation of the sites. Volunteers' maintenance activities make the sites presentable hiking and teaching destinations as well.

There are several sites in Helsinki, more information: <https://adoptoimonumentti.fi> and **contact persons:** Ancient monuments: Heini Hämäläinen, 040 334 5521, heini.hamalainen@hel.fi  
Buildings: Anne Salminen, 040 334 7012, anne.salminen@hel.fi

# Interpersonal skills in volunteer activities



# Good interaction involves:

- Making a good first impression and showing interest
- Being kind, calm and patient
- Respecting others
- Observing the environment and the atmosphere – listening and making eye contact are important
- “Two ears and one mouth”

“We’re involved in volunteer activities because as long as we are able to walk, we have to be on the move, or we’ll go mad. When you get to know the regulars, you start giving and receiving. There are so many lonely people, and this is a place where you can talk as much as you like.”

Tiina and Eki, service centre volunteers



# Listening exercise in pairs

The purpose of the exercise is to draw attention to how important it is to be heard. It also helps develop your listening skills. The exercise is carried out in pairs.

- Decide which one of you will start with talking and which one with listening.
- The talker describes how they see themselves as an interactor. How do they converse and present their views? How do they listen?
- The other person listens without interrupting and, in their turn, describes what they heard in their own words (without interpreting it).
- Switch roles.

# Cultivating discussion

Useful (specifying) questions:

- Do you feel that...?
- I'm not sure I understand what you mean... Did you mean that...?
- Just to make sure I understood, did you mean...?
- Could you tell me more...?

Active listener;

- When interaction is appreciative, people can learn to listen, appreciate and understand others' thoughts and actions, even if they differ greatly from their own views.

# Interaction

Good interaction features the same elements regardless of whether we are interacting with young people, adults, seniors, disabled people, customers or patients, i.e. with any person.

You should bear the following in mind:

- People are individual and multifaceted.
- Interaction may entail special characteristics (e.g. communication tools or aids, different languages, etc.).
- You can and should ask the staff for advice, help and instructions.
- A smile will light up the room!

# Meeting a person with a memory disorder

Memory disorders change people's ability to express themselves and understand communication around them. Even though a person with a memory disorder gradually loses many skills, they continue to have many strengths, which can be used as the basis for building interaction.

## **Be sensitive to the situation and give the person time:**

- Read the person's facial expressions and non-verbal communication.
- Take your time and wait for the person to finish what they have to say.
- Do not talk about more than one thing in the same sentence.
- Ask questions that can be answered with 'yes', 'no' or 'I don't know'.
- Use familiar everyday words.
- Repeat yourself once, try expressing yourself differently or return to the topic later.
- End the conversation if your conversation partner does not want to continue.

“One of the best things about volunteering is looking beyond yourself. It forces you to become less self-centred. Being active with others has helped me a lot and it has been easy to get involved:

I just didn't say no when asked.”

Jani, peer group instructor



# Come and join the activities!



# Contact information

- <https://www.facebook.com/VapaaehtoistoimintaHelsinki>
- [vapaaehtoistoiminta@hel.fi](mailto:vapaaehtoistoiminta@hel.fi)
- <https://www.hel.fi/maahanmuuttajat/en/free-time/associations/volunteer-work/>

City of Helsinki / Culture and Leisure Division / Development Services  
Development experts in developing volunteer activities:

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