

# FRIEDENSKREIS HALLE E.V.



<https://www.friedenskreis-halle.de/>



## SUMMARY

Friedenskreis Halle e.V. ("Peace Circle Halle r.a.", r.a. = registered association) is a non governmental organisation in the field of peace politics and peace education located in Halle, Germany.

### Background and goals

The experience of the non-violent political changes in 1989/1990 in eastern Germany and eastern Europe, awoke the hope in many people, that a society without violence, a Germany without military and a world without war could become possible. These goals brought together people from different citizen initiatives of Halle in 1990 in the Friedenskreis.

In 1991 the association was founded.

### Contents

We have a dynamic understanding of peace: We do not understand peace as a state of affairs, not as a far-off goal and not as just as the absence of war. To us peace is a path towards a cooperative, fair and non-violent living together in diversity by which self- fulfilment and freedom of each individual become possible.

Basic themes and guiding values of our work are: active non-violence, constructive as well as civil conflict management, living democracy, transcultural diversity and global justice

### Organisation, Structure and Offers

The work of the association is supported by paid staff and volunteers as well as public/project funding and donations/sponsoring.

### The association works in three areas:

- 1. Peace politics:** actions, campaigns, exhibitions, presentations, lectures and workshops next to local and regional networking
- 2. Peace education:** own workshops, seminars and trainings in Halle, in the region and abroad in cooperation with local/ international partners, matching the requests for educational events with professional trainers
- 3. Peace services** – international voluntary service: consultation and information for interested persons and organisations next to hosting, sending and coordinating within „weltwärts“ voluntary program

Next to and within these areas we host structure- and model-projects.



# FRIEDENSKREIS HALLE E.V.

In the realm of Incoming voluntary service, Friedenskreis Halle e.V. operates as coordinating organisation and a place of assignment.

## **Please be aware:**

- Lots of work at PC, office practical support
- Next to the work in the office, the volunteer can have tasks at other locations depending on the help needed within different projects
- Good German is very helpful
- This is a good chance to learn how an NGO functions

**Please check the handout /  
announcement  
"Become a volunteer!"**



## **FIELD OF ENGAGEMENT AND ACTIVITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER WITHIN PLACE OF ASSIGNMENT**

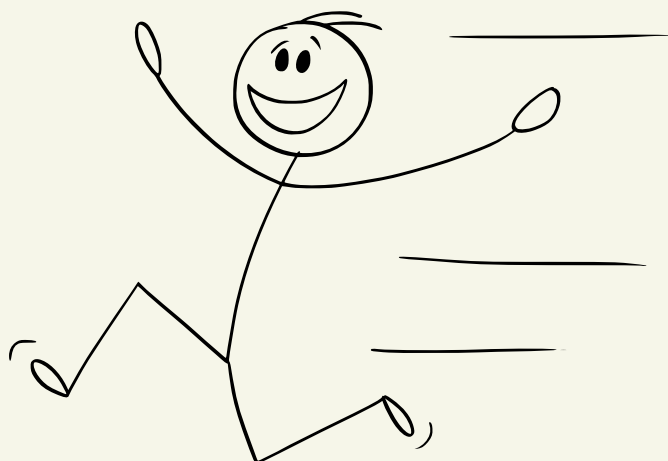
The voluntary service at this poa mainly is office work and educational work with children, youth and adults.

The volunteer will mainly support the area "Peace education" projects at organisation and preparation stages.

The focus of our educational work, especially the work on political development and civil conflict management is done at schools, nurseries and open public events.

### **Activities of the volunteer:**





- supporting the area's coordination (documentation, administration/finances, public relations work, research work etc.)
- participating in and supporting workshops, seminars and trainings
- developing their own project
- supporting the activities of the office and the association (office communication, general public relations work, organization of events and festivals etc.)
- participating in team activities (team meetings, team days etc.)








# FRIEDENSKREIS



## VOLUNTEERS PROFILE – **SPECIFIC FOR THIS PLACE OF ASSIGNMENT**

-  good knowledge of English (spoken as well as written language)
-  willingness to do paperwork and PR related tasks
-  interest in non-formal education and NGO field
-  interest in peace related issues and post/colonial theory

## VOLUNTEERS PROFILE – **GENERAL**

-  18 to 28 years (exceptions: people with disability)
-  High school certificate or comparable personal qualifications
-  knowledge of English (B2) and/or German (willingness to learn starting in the home country)
-  motivation to learn through voluntary service (as peace service) in different fields and to get involved with civil society
-  openness to the special structure of a voluntary service with Friedenskreis Halle



## **MANDATORY „SERVICE RELATED ACTIVITIES“ :**

- Participation in the accompanying educational program (seminars)
- Implementation of at least one personal project
- Occupation with and engagement in topics and activities of (local) civil society
- Learning German in depth
- Willingness to get involved in civil society in one's home country after the service

# REPORTS OF FORMER VOLUNTEERS



## SANDRA, 2016-2017

Hello, I'm Sandra from Macedonia. I arrived in Halle four months ago, in September 2016. Halle is small beautiful city where one can meet a lot of interesting people and as well enjoy variety of events.

In all time period I spent here, one of the most amusing areas is my working place. When I say amusing, I mean it is challenging and dynamic. Because this letter is mostly related to my working experience, I will stick to the subject of writing.

I have two places of assignment. One is the head Office of Friedenskreis e.V., where I spend three days, and the rest two days of the working week at the Pflanzgarten (Botanical Garden). At the beginning I find everything challenging, which I think is pretty normal for every foreigner. Especially because this was my very first time in Germany and I didn't actually know what to expect.

But as time passed, I discovered the right direction. The first month was adaptation period where I met all the colleagues and was introduced to the obligations. From this point on my presence started to have sense. Mainly work with the promotion material of Friedenskreis, designing and preparing documents, meanwhile I offer my help wherever needed. That means, if someone of the colleagues need some task to be done, I'm there.

The next is generally content of one of my working day at FK. In the morning hours, around 10, most of the employees are in the office, starting the day with a cup of coffee, then at 12:30 we start the

'Mittagessen' when we gather and share a moment of relaxation and homemade food. After the short break people go back to finish their daily tasks. Almost everyone at FK follows this rhythm. I still learn the rhythm :).

Meanwhile many things happen beside the work at the office. I often go home and work from there because the lack of software at the office. This makes the day more dynamic. Such a freedom makes me feel that I have gained mutual trust and support from the members of FK. Most of the tasks are connected to designing process, exploring different shapes and colors suitable for the actual project.

Beside the design, I have responsibility to attend on the meetings which are happening every second Tuesday where we discuss work from previous days. I learned a lot new things as well, like sharing with and caring about people around me. This happens the first three working days, and the rest of the week I spend, as I mentioned, at Pflanzgarten.

Pflanzgarten is a botanical garden, where the biology classes are held by Frau Jäger. The classes are combined with 6-10 years old children, curious little creatures, which are still in a deep connection with the nature. The way Frau Jäger teaches is interactive education, through practice, cooking and planting different kinds of plants and flowers. I help with program of the day, for example if the children are planting, I'm planting; if they are cooking, I'm cooking as well. My role is to be part of the children and the teacher, do and watch. I simply enjoy the time spent there learning and refreshing my memory about nature.

Beside all pleasant feelings I experience here in Germany, there is, of course, a part which is not so "awesome". The biggest reason for that is I am here, far from home. Experiences are not consistent only of beautiful moments, there are also scary moments. The most scary for me is socialization, especially in the way I feel the language barriers.

# REPORTS OF FORMER VOLUNTEERS

I don't speak German, this makes me feel weak, but here is the other side: the challenge! Accept it and one day this will bring fruits and you'll be grateful. This is constantly in my mind. Every day I learn something new, some new words, try to understand and then to speak.

During the day, after work, I mostly go to the other apartment next to me and spend some hours with my people — the other volunteers. We talk, exchange experience and stories of our days, making plans for future... Simply we use our time in no rush, like observers. Please this should not give you a wrong image, we are pretty much active :) Whatever opportunity comes, we grab it. It is always about self-motivation.

There is a lot to say about these past four months volunteering. I just tried to put the most relevant things which I suppose will help you to understand how this reality influences the life of young foreigner.



**TANYA , 2023-24**

Hi there! My name is Tanya, and as I write this, I'm on my way back to Ukraine after spending a year volunteering at Friedenskreis (FK — you'll get used to all the abbreviations soon enough!).

I still remember my first few weeks, stumbling over the name Friedenskreis

Halle — don't worry if it feels like a tongue-twister at first! My German didn't improve that much, but by the end, I had at least memorized how to spell and say the most important words. Some of those words will become important for you too, so don't stress if they seem tricky at the start.

FK was my POA — sorry, that's the "place of assignment" — and now it will be yours. What exactly you'll be doing, I can't say for sure because each volunteer's experience is a bit different.

But trust me, if you stay open-minded, curious, and don't hesitate to ask your colleagues about their projects, you'll find your own way to contribute and grow. FK has so much going on, so dive in, try new things, and be ready to learn. Now, let me introduce you to a few new words and key places that will shape your year:

You'll most likely be living with two other volunteers in the flat, and it's an interesting experience from the start! My flatmates and I began by arguing over our different cultural habits and perspectives, but that's all part of the process. With time, we learned to be open with each other, respected our differences, and became really close friends. Don't be afraid of those initial misunderstandings — they're just the beginning of forming strong, lasting relationships. There are also two other flats nearby where other volunteers will be living, so it's easy to stay in touch with them as well.

Reformhaus

— this is the building where FK's main office is located. It's beautiful, but I'll be honest — working on the 4th floor can sometimes feel like a workout! But once you step into the office, you'll notice how calming and cozy the atmosphere is. There are books and plants everywhere (some people are truly obsessed with flowers and greenery), and it gives the place a relaxed, homey feel.

Sitting in the office all day can feel challenging at times, especially when you're used to being more active. But whenever I started thinking about how I wasn't working with children like some of the other volunteers, I was honestly relieved. I realized how lucky I was to have such "boring" work — except it's not really boring at all! Sure, there's some paperwork, but that's only part of it.

You'll also have brainstorming sessions, meetings with colleagues, and you'll get to work on different projects. Seeing the results of your work is incredibly rewarding, and it keeps things exciting and fresh.

# REPORTS OF FORMER VOLUNTEERS

## Versammlungsraum

— this is the meeting room where you'll gather with your colleagues. Some of your most important meetings, as well as many lunches, will happen here. It's not just a room; it's where you'll start to feel like part of the team.

## KU3

— this is another FK office - a smaller, cozier place, but I loved it. It's also where we'd have farewell lunches when people were leaving. You'll find that FK is a place where people come and go, but the connections you make with them will stay with you.

## Halle

— of course, this is where you'll be living. It's a beautiful city, and one of the best things about it is that everything is close by. Your flat and the FK office are just a 10–15 minute walk apart, and you'll quickly get used to navigating the city. Take the time to explore its charm.

## Peißnitz

— this is one of the places closest to my heart. It's a park near the river, and honestly, I can't think about it without getting emotional. It holds so many memories for me, and I'm sure it'll become a special place for you too. Take walks there, take picnics, go to events and festivals there, enjoy the peace, and soak in the beauty of nature.

You'll pick up so many new words during your time here, not just in terms of language but in terms of experiences. You'll remember places, faces, and moments that will be tied to these words forever. My year was full of challenges, and it might be the same for you, but that's part of what makes it such a valuable experience. It's about how you handle those challenges, grow from them, and keep moving forward.

Make the most of this year — travel when you can, explore Halle, and make deep connections with the people around you. This city and this experience will become a part of you in ways you can't imagine yet.

Wishing you an unforgettable year filled with adventure, growth, and joy!