



RUCHI

Rural Centre for Human Interests

Volunteer India program

STV Programme 2017

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About RUCHI

Rural Centre for Human Interests (RUCHI) is a community development organization with ever increasing focus on youth development and intercultural learning through voluntary service. RUCHI got registered in 1983, under Indian Societies Registration Act as a non-political, non-profit making voluntary organization.

RUCHI was established keeping in mind the problems and restrictions that a remote community faces on day to day basis. These could be due to poverty, lack of knowledge, poor infrastructure or at times difficult terrain. As a result RUCHI has always implemented its project with people centered approach and gave priority to community development. With 33 years in this field, RUCHI has accumulated extensive knowledge in community development with project area ranging from semi-urban background to extremely remote communities requiring two days of walk certain time of the year.

Over time RUCHI has also developed and successfully implemented many low cost technologies. We are now acting as a resource organization for Indian Government and other NGO's pursuing rural community development work.

RUCHI has a head office in Bandh village and two regional offices in Rajgarh and Punjab. RUCHI is well equipped with staff, infrastructure and technical support to implement developmental projects across country with help of partner NGO's.



Our motto

Through Voluntary services, RUCHI aims to promote intercultural learning between individual, group and community, leading to better understanding and tolerance towards each-others culture. We believe achieving peace, harmony and working towards a world with fewer boundaries is a never ending process which can be achieved by increasing youth mobility through voluntary camps globally.

Our Approach

For past 33years RUCHI has committed its efforts and resources towards rural development. All our projects have a people centered approach and ongoing commitment with our projects and partners. Our workcamp offer a unique opportunity to gain global perspective for volunteer and local youth increasing their professional competencies. Voluntary service not only help community projects but also provide a much needed overview and technical support. With work camp we provide a unique learning experience for volunteers.

Network and collaboration

RUCHI is affiliated with international and national voluntary service networks. 2012, it got elected in Executive Committee of Network of Voluntary Development in Asia (NVDA) for a term of 2 years, It is also member of Coordinating Committee of International Voluntary Service (CCIVS). RUCHI also partners with Alliance of European Voluntary service Organization (ALLIANCE).

Besides international networks RUCHI also affiliates with national organizations like Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), Delhi School of Social Works, Tata Institute of Social Science, Xavier Institute of Social Science (XISS) and students from University of Delhi, Kurukshetra, Allahabad etc. RUCHI hosts students from these institutes and facilitates their rural management studies.

Our Volunteer Program

- Short Term Workcamp (STW). (13days)
- Very short volunteer project. (7 days)
- Long - Medium Term Volunteer, LMTV. (1-12months)
- Group/Bilateral Workcamp. 10+ vols. (13days)
- Family work camp.
- Internship.
- Home based camps.

Areas of Interests

- Renovation/ maintenance.
- Environment and conservation.
- Non formal education.
- Community development.
- Construction.
- Culture exposure.
- Children with disability
- Creative arts and crafts



SUMMARY OF STV PROJECTS (WORKCAMPS) OF RUCHI DURING 2017

Month	Code	Project / Theme	Location	Theme	Dates 2017	Max. Places (Age-18+)
June – 2017	RC- 08/17	Tibetan-Indian culture	Dharamshala -1 Mc Leodganj	CULT/EDU	05/06 – 17/06	10
	RC- 09/17	Every drop counts	Solan-1 Baddi	ENV/SOC	12/06 – 24/06	10
	RC- 10/17	Education for all – pre-education	Solan-2 Bandh	RENO/EDU	26/06 – 08/07	10
July – 2017	RC- 11/17	Tibetan-Indian culture (No school work)	Dharamshala -2 Mc Leodganj	CUL/EDU	03/07 – 15/07	10
	RC- 12/17	Maharaja Culture	Jodhpur-1	CUL/EDU	03/07 – 15/07	10
	RC- 13/17	Tibetan-Indian culture (No school work)	Dharamshala -3 Mc Leodganj	CUL/EDU	10/07 – 22/07	10
	RC- 14/17	Save The earth – Plant a tree	Solan-3 Bandh	ENV	10/07 – 22/07	10
	RC- 15/17	Ecotourism/Education	Chail-1, Shimla	SOC/EDU	17/07 – 29/07	10
	RC- 16/17	Women Power	Solan-4 RUCHI	SOC	17/07 – 29/07	10
	RC- 17/17	Creative Arts	Solan-5 RUCHI	ART/SOC	24/07 – 30/07	6
	Rc- 18/17	Ecotourism/Education	Chail-2, Shimla	SOC/EDU	31/07 – 12/08	10
Aug - 2017	RC-19 /17	Ecotourism/Education	Chail-3 Shimla	SOC/EDU	07/08 – 19/08	10
	RC-20-/17	Save The Earth – plant a tree	Solan-6 - Bandh	ENV	07/08 – 19/08	10
	RC- 21/17	Tibetan-Indian culture	Dharamshala -4 Mc Leodganj	CUL/EDU	14/08 – 26/08	10
	RC- 22/17	Maharaja Culture	Jodhpur-2	CUL/EDU	14/08 – 26/08	10
	RC- 23/17	Creative arts	Solan-7 RUCHI	ARTS/SOC	21/08 – 27/08	6
	RC- 24/17	Women Power	Solan-8 RUCHI	SOC	28/08 – 09/09	10
Sept – 2017	RC- 25/17	Tibetan-Indian culture	Dharamshala -5 Mc Leodganj	CUL/EDU	04/09 – 16/09	10
	RC- 26/17	Ecotourism/Education	Chail-4	SOC/EDU	04/09 – 16/09	10
	RC- 27/17	Maharaja Culture	Jodhpur-3	CUL/EDU	11/09 – 23/09	10
	RC- 28/17	Creative Arts	Solan-9 RUCHI	ARTS/SOC	18/09 – 24/09	6
	RC- 29/17	Dussehra festival and Tibetan Culture	Dharamshala -6 Mc Leodganj	CUL/EDU	25/09 – 01/10	10
	RC- 30/17	Every drop counts	Solan-10 Baddi	ENV/SOC	25/09 – 07/10	10
Oct – 2017	RC- 31/17	Tibetan-Indian culture	Dharamshala -7 Mc Leodganj	CUL/SOC	02/10 – 14/10	10
	RC- 32/17	Save the Earth – protect trees	Solan-11 RUCHI	ENV	02/10 – 14/10	10
	RC- 33/17	Festival of Lights with Tibetan Culture	Dharamshala -8 Mc Leodganj	FEST/CUL	16/10 – 22/10	10
	RC- 34/17	Creative Arts	Solan-12 RUCHI	ARTS/SOC	16/10 – 22/10	6
Nov 2017	RC-35/17	Every drop counts	Solan-13 RUCHI	ENV/SOC	06/11 – 18/11	10
Dec 2017	RC-36/17	Women Power	Solan-14 RUCHI	SOC	04/12 –16/12	10



INCREDIBLE INDIA

Volunteering with RUCHI



Number of States	29
Number of Union Territories	7 with NCT New Delhi
Total area	32,87,240 Sq Km
Total population	1.252 Billion
Population density	382 People/ Sq Km

Source Census 2011



Description of the Short Term Camps

General Information:

- All Short Term Camps (STC) last two weeks with fixed dates.
- There will always be a RUCHI Camp Leader
- Volunteers take care of their own travel costs and bear all personal expenses during free time.
- Volunteers have to be 18 years or older
- No special skills are required; volunteers have to be open minded and willing to adapt to challenging conditions.
- Volunteers' contribution is always recognized and appreciated but they will have to accept the fact that they cannot change the world in two weeks.
- Living conditions will be simple.
- Volunteers must be willing to understand and respect local as well each other's culture.
- Volunteers must be prepared to live in harmony with others and work as a team.
- For every STC there will be a special info-sheet with more detailed information.
- Working hours will be 5-6 hours, 5 days a week.

SHORT-TERM CAMPS:

This is a voluntary service project developed for a short duration of two weeks. Under this camp, besides experiencing rural culture, the volunteers get an opportunity to foster international dialogue and friendship. During the camp, volunteers work, live and have fun together in a simple natural environment. Depending on the programme of each project, volunteers can join activities in different areas of RUCHI's work.

Short duration camps are held round the year. Group of 6 to 10 people are invited to participate in them. In these camps they join projects involving civil works such as construction of Irrigation Tank, development & protection of Natural Spring, construction of Ferro Cement Tank for rain water harvesting, repairs and renovation works, teaching/arts/games with school children, trees plantation.

The contribution for a two-week camp is Euro 220 and is Euro 150 for a one week long Very Short Workcamps. The participants are required to pay the contribution in cash on the first day of their arrival in the workcamp. Please note that there is no ATM available in some of the work camp areas. Therefore, money for your personal use has to be changed in Delhi or Chandigarh city. The contribution covers all basic expenses, e.g. vegetarian food, housing and local transportation on weekdays/ work camp. You will need money for weekend extra expenses and for your personal toiletries. Alcoholic drinks are not included.

Why the extra fee?

RUCHI with other NGO's in India is not financially supported by government to host projects related to IVS. Hence all projects are self funded with a participation fee. Given the remote location and various complexities we have tried our best to make it as affordable as possible for volunteers. Being a non-profit organization we emphasize on transparency, below is how we spend collected participation fee.

- Food, accommodation and logistics of volunteer during workcamp.
- Project setup costs. (material and logistics cost)
- Running the camp. (wages of professional like mason, carpenter, plumber etc and training local youth supported by us.)
- Office running/admin expenses. (Internet, photocopy, stationary, electricity, phone, salaries, office equipments, tools and rent etc.)
- Supporting small community project.
- International travel costs to global conferences and membership fee for networking.



Theme: Tibetan-Indian Culture

RC-08/17	Dharamshala-1-McLeodganj	Tibetan-Indian Culture	CUL/EDU	05/06 - 17/06
RC-11/17	Dharamshala-2-McLeodganj	Tibetan-Indian Culture	CUL/EDU	03/07 - 15/07
RC-13/17	Dharamshala-3-McLeodganj	Tibetan-Indian Culture	CUL/EDU	10/07 - 22/07
RC-21/17	Dharamshala-4-McLeodganj	Tibetan-Indian Culture	CUL/EDU	14/08 - 26/08
RC-25/17	Dharamshala-5-McLeodganj	Tibetan-Indian Culture	CUL/EDU	04/09 - 16/09
RC-31/17	Dharamshala-7-McLeodganj	Tibetan-Indian Culture	CUL/EDU	02/10 - 14/10

Location: Dharamshala, is a small but internationally well known town in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. It is 70 km north of Pathankot city and 15kms from Kangra town. Dharamshala offers a number of treks to tourists and a good majestic view of great Dhauladhar range of mountains. Dharamshala is a district head quarter for Kangra district and also happens to be the Secretariat of Tibetan spiritual leader, The Dalai Lama. Dharamshala offers tourists culture of Tibet and a different experience. Like any other hilly area, the houses in the area are scattered. The economy of the Tibetans is on tourism whereas that of local villagers is purely dependent on agriculture. Project will be held in sub-urban area of McLeodganj.

Work: This camp will provide an exposure to local as well as Tibetan culture. The volunteers will come to know of the history of Tibet and how the Tibetans fled Tibet to live in exile at this place. Inter-cultural learning will broaden horizons of volunteers on issues concerning environment and livelihood. Volunteers will also work on facelift of local school, create learning opportunities for children and make educational painting or do some renovation.

Accommodation: Volunteers will live in guest house with simple conditions and share accommodation with other volunteers. All meals will be cooked and served in guest house. A cook will be there but volunteers are expected to help him and occasionally cook their own meals. Self-management is required. Sleeping bag is required, especially, if you are looking for or interested in trekking.

Leisure time: The volunteers will have opportunity to visit the seat of spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama and other historical Hindu temples. Opportunities will be there for short and long treks in the mountains after the camp. During weekend visit to Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab can also be arranged.

International Terminal: New Delhi (320 Kms); **Domestic Terminal:** Gaggal/Dharamshala (15 kms)

Nearest railway station: Pathankot (60 kms) from Dharamshala.

Participation Fee: Euro 220.



Theme: The Life Line - Water

RC-09/17	Solan-1 Baddi	Every drop counts	ENV/SOC	12/06 – 24/06
RC-30/17	Solan-10 Baddi	Every drop counts	ENV/SOC	25/09 – 07/10
RC-35/17	Solan-13 Baddi	Every drop counts	ENV/SOC	06/11 – 18/11

Location: Baddi is a fast growing industrialized township of Solan district. It is close to Chandigarh city which is famous for its Rock Garden. RUCHI has launched an integrated project in 30 villages and slums. The area is situated at an altitude of 1000 to 3000 feet above MSL. The volunteer will work on the project in these 30 villages. Health, sanitation and water is a serious problem in the area and the project aims at improving these facilities.

Work: Volunteers will work on water conservation work as well as educating people on importance of water in life. Water is a precious resource. Despite having good rainfall in this area people still face serious problem during non-monsoon months. RUCHI is making its best to save every drop of water to meet needs. Poor quality of water leads to serious health problems. The creative volunteers can develop some relevant education materials and all will have opportunities to be involved with physical construction works at sites. Similarly water is required to irrigate farms for sustained food production in this agro based economy.

Time permitting, volunteers may also be involved in cleaning existing water bodies and renovation of structures. During monsoon and winter rains these structures receive silt from upstream which reduces the storage affecting ground water recharge. The work will desilt/renovate the structures for effective reservoir of water.

Accommodation: Volunteers will live in the RUCHI campus/host families in shared accommodation. Asian squat type toilet and English WC will be available. Vegetarian food will be served. A cook will be there but volunteers are expected to help him and occasionally cook their own meals. Self-management is required. Meantime volunteer can learn Indian cuisine (cooking). Bed sheets and sleeping bags are required.

Leisure time: Self organized city tours and excursions. Old Sikh and Hindu temples in the near vicinity can be visited. Nearby Kasauli town is another hill station as a tourist attraction. A visit to Shimla will offer an opportunity to see high Himalayan Mountains.

International Terminal: New Delhi (320 Kms); **Domestic Terminal:** Chandigarh (70 kms)

Nearest railway station: Kalka (30 kms)

Participation Fee: Euro 220



THEME: Education

RC-10/17 Solan-2 Bandh Education for All -renovation EDU/ ART 26/06 – 08/07

Location: Bandh is a small and sleepy hilly village 2 kms from RUCHI office. It is 30 km from Kalka and 60 km from Chandigarh. There is a pre-education centre and a primary school in the village. RUCHI campus is one km. from the village.

Work: Volunteers will work in the pre-education centre for kids. The building of the centre needs renovation and facelift. Therefore, the volunteers will white wash or paint the walls of school and do some wall writing. Subject would be related to peace and love, Global warming, inter-cultural learning, good message through painting on wall for youth and public. Volunteer will get orientation before starting project. Additional activities will include learning of various developmental issues and solutions. They will visit various humanitarian projects and interact with the villagers.

Requirements: Interest in Art and learning ability, High motivation.

Accommodation: Volunteers will live in the RUCHI campus. All basic amenities will be available with library facilities. Asian squat type toilet and English WC will be available. Vegetarian food will be served. A cook will be there but volunteers are expected to help him and occasionally cook their own meals. Self-management is required. Meantime volunteer can learn Indian cuisine (cooking). Sleeping bag is required.

Leisure time: Self organized city tours and excursions. Old Sikh and Hindu temples in the near vicinity can be visited. Nearby Kasauli town is another hill station as a tourist attraction. A visit to Shimla will offer an opportunity to see high Himalayan Mountains.

International Terminal: New Delhi (320 Kms); **Domestic Terminal:** Chandigarh (70 kms)

Nearest railway station: Kalka (30 kms) **Participation Fee:** Euro 220



Theme: Talking walls/ Creative Arts

RC-17/17	Solan-5 RUCHI	Talking walls/Creative arts	ART/SOC	24/07 – 30/07
RC-23/17	Solan-7 RUCHI	Talking walls/Creative arts	ART/SOC	21/08 – 27/08
RC-28/17	Solan-9 RUCHI	Talking walls/Creative arts	ART/SOC	18/09 – 24/09
RC-34/17	Solan-12 RUCHI	Talking walls/Creative arts	ART/SOC	16/10 – 22/10

Location: Ruchi campus is located near Bandh village. It is 30 km from Kalka and 60 km from Chandigarh. Bandh village is small located in interior mountainous area and the volunteers will have a unique opportunity to live with nature in a peaceful environment. RUCHI campus is one km. from the village.

Work: Volunteers will work in Ruchi campus doing arts work/painting on wall. Subject would be related to peace and love, Global warming, inter-cultural learning, good message through painting on wall for youth and public. Volunteer will get orientation before starting project. Additional activities will include learning of various developmental issues and solutions. They will visit various humanitarian projects and interact with the villagers.

Requirements: Interest in Art and learning ability, High motivation.

Accommodation: Volunteers will live in the RUCHI campus. All basic amenities will be available with library facilities. Asian squat type toilet and English WC will be available. Vegetarian food will be served. A cook will be there but volunteers are expected to help him and occasionally cook their own meals. Self-management is required. Meantime volunteer can learn Indian cuisine (cooking). Sleeping bag is required.

Leisure time: Self organized city tours and excursions. Old Sikh and Hindu temples in the near vicinity can be visited. Nearby Kasauli town is another hill station as a tourist attraction. A visit to Shimla will offer an opportunity to see high Himalayan Mountains.

International Terminal: New Delhi (320 Kms); **Domestic Terminal:** Chandigarh (70 kms)

Nearest railway station: Kalka (30 kms) **Participation Fee:** Euro 150



Theme: Greening of Forest

RC-14/17	Solan-3 Bandh	Save the Earth – Plant a Tree	ENV	10/07 – 22/07
RC-20/17	Solan-6 Bandh	Save the Earth – Plant a Tree	ENV	07/08 – 19/08
RC-32/17	Solan-11 Bandh	Save the Earth – Protect trees	ENV	02/10 – 14/10

Location: Ruchi campus is located near Bandh village. It is 30 km from Kalka and 60 km from Chandigarh. Bandh village is small located in interior mountainous area and the volunteers will have a unique opportunity to live with nature in a peaceful environment. RUCHI campus is one km. from the village.

Work: The volunteers will undertake plantation of fast growing trees with soil binding capabilities across the roadside and in RUCHI campus. The area is prone to land slides and soil erosions. Every year, massive plantation is done across roadside to stabilize soil and increase green cover. This is a monsoon season and most of the plantation is done during this period.

The volunteers will also tend to fruit trees (Guava, Mango and Amla with onion and ginger) in RUCHI farm. The work may relate to mulching, removing weeds, pruning and preparing organic compost.

Accommodation: Volunteers will live in the RUCHI campus. All basic amenities will be available with library facilities. Asian squat type toilet and English WC will be available. Vegetarian food will be served. A cook will be there but volunteers are expected to help him and occasionally cook their own meals. Self-management is required. Meantime volunteer can learn Indian cuisine (cooking). Sleeping bag is required.

Leisure time: Self organized city tours and excursions. Old Sikh and Hindu temples in the near vicinity can be visited. Nearby Kasauli town is another hill station as a tourist attraction. A visit to Shimla will offer an opportunity to see high Himalayan Mountains.

International Terminal: New Delhi (320 Kms); **Domestic Terminal:** Chandigarh (65 kms)

Nearest railway station: Kalka (25 kms) **Participation Fee:** Euro 220



Theme: Maharaja Culture/Com. Dev. – Jodhpur

RC-12/17	Rajasthan-Jodhpur-1	Maharaja (real Indian) Culture	CUL/EDU	03/07 - 15/07
RC-22/17	Rajasthan-Jodhpur- 2	Maharaja (real Indian) Culture	CUL/EDU	14/08 - 26/08
RC-27/17	Rajasthan-Jodhpur-3	Maharaja (real Indian) Culture	CUL/EDU	11/09 - 23/09

Location: Jodhpur. This bustling desert city is the second largest in Rajasthan after Jaipur. Also known as “sun city” It was founded by Rao Jodha, the leader of the Rathore clan, in 1459 AD. The mammoth, imposing fortress (Meherangarh) has a landscape dominating a rocky ridge with the eight gates leading out of fortress.

Work: This camp will provide an exposure to Rajasthan culture. The volunteers will have a chance to learn about Jodhpur history which revolves around Rathore clan. Inter-cultural learning will broaden horizons of volunteers on issues concerning environment and livelihood. Volunteers will also work on facelift of local school, create learning opportunities for children and teach children.

Accommodation: Volunteers will live in guest house with simple conditions and share accommodation with other volunteers. All meals will be cooked and served in guest house. A cook will be there but volunteers are expected to help him and occasionally cook their own meals. Self-management is required. Sleeping bag is required for volunteers looking or interested in camel safari.

Leisure time: The volunteers on weekend will have opportunity to visit other historical town like Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Jaipur, Ajmer to name a few; desert safari on camel can also be facilitated. Jodhpur is well connected by rail, road and air to other regions around India giving countless options to volunteer after workcamp.

International Terminal: Jaipur (330 Kms) and New Delhi (590 Kms); **Domestic Terminal:** Jodhpur

Nearest railway station: Jodhpur

Participation Fee: Euro 220.



Theme: Eco tourism /Education – Chail, Shimla

RC-15/17	Shimla-Chail -1	Ecotourism/Education	SOC/EDU	17/07 - 29/07
RC-18/17	Shimla-Chail -2	Ecotourism/Education	SOC/EDU	31/07 - 12/08
RC-19/17	Shimla-Chail -3	Ecotourism/Education	SOC/EDU	07/08 - 19/08
RC-26/17	Shimla-Chail -4	Ecotourism/Education	SOC/EDU	04/09 - 16/09

Location: Chail is a little sleepy town located an hours drive from State capital “Shimla”. The transformation of this little village community began in late 18th century when Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala decided to create a new summer capital which would be better than “Shimla”: all this for bruised ego.

Nestling in shelter of virgin forest and untrodden hills, Maharaja Bhupinder Singh developed the highest cricket field in the world in Chail. Well kept and maintained, more than the excitement of game, the pitch offers picturesque view of the surrounding, with tall forest all around it. The proud ruler made sure that Chail had everything that Shimla doesn't.

Work: The volunteers will get exposure to local history and culture. Working closely with local community volunteers will be involved in activities related to eco tourism, national park maintenance, floriculture etc. In addition volunteers will also work on facelift of local school, create learning opportunities for children and teach children.

Accommodation: Volunteers will live in guest house/ home stay with simple conditions and share accommodation with other volunteers. All meals will be cooked and served in guest house. A cook will be there but volunteers are expected to help him and occasionally cook their own meals. Self-management is required. Sleeping bags are also necessary for volunteers looking or interested in trekking.

Leisure time: Self organized city tours and excursions. A variety of treks are available in close proximity. A visit to Shimla will offer an opportunity to see high Himalayan Mountains. Chail Palace and world's highest cricket stadium can also be visited.

International Terminal: New Delhi (360 Kms); **Domestic Terminal:** Chandigarh (90km) and Shimla (70 kms)

Nearest railway station: Kandaghat on small gauge (26 kms)

Participation Fee: Euro 220



Theme: Women Power

RC-16/17	Solan-4 RUCHI	Women Power	SOC/EDU	17/07 – 29/07
RC-24/17	Solan-8 RUCHI	Women Power	SOC/EDU	28/08 – 09/09
RC-36/17	Solan-13 RU HI	Women Power	SOC/EDU	04/12 – 16/12

Location: Baddi is an industrial town of Solan district located at a distance of 35 km from Chandigarh city. The township is full of slums developed around villages and close to city center. Baddi faces problems of sanitation and poor health. The problem is serious with women because of their ignorance. RUCHI campus is 25 km. from the Baddi town.

Work: Volunteers will work in slums or adjacent villages. Educating women on health, hygiene, sanitation, environment and micro-credit will be the prime focus of the work. Volunteer will get orientation before starting project. Additional activities will include learning of various developmental issues and solutions. They will visit various humanitarian projects and interact with the villagers.

Requirements: Interest in gender sensitivity and learning ability, High motivation.

Accommodation: Volunteers will live in the Guest House or Host Family. Simple basic amenities will be available. Asian squat type toilet or English WC will be available. Vegetarian food will be served. A cook will be there but volunteers are expected to help him and occasionally cook their own meals. Self-management is required. Sleeping bag is desirable.

Leisure time: Self organized city tours and excursions. Old Sikh and Hindu temples in the near vicinity can be visited. Nearby Chandigarh city with internationally known Rock Garden is a tourist attraction. A visit to Shimla will offer an opportunity to see high Himalayan Mountains.

International Terminal: New Delhi (320 Kms);

Domestic Terminal: Chandigarh (35 kms)

Nearest railway station: Chandigarh (30 kms)

Participation Fee: Euro 220



Theme: National Festivals

RC-29/17	Dharamshala-6	Dussehra Festival with Tibetan Culture	FEST/CUL	25/09 - 01/10
RC-33/17	Dharamshala-8	Festival of Lights with Tibetan Culture	FEST/CUL	16/10 - 22/10

Location: Dharamshala, is a small but internationally well known town in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. It is 70 km north of Pathankot city and 15kms from Kangra town. Dharamshala offers a number of treks to tourists and a good majestic view of great Dhauladhar range of mountains. Dharamshala is a district head quarter for Kangra district and also happens to be the Secretariat of Tibetan spiritual leader, The Dalai Lama. Dharamshala offers tourists culture of Tibet and a different experience. Like any other hilly area, the houses in the area are scattered. The economy of the Tibetans is on tourism whereas that of local villagers is purely dependent on agriculture.

Work: Months of September and November host two prominent Indian festivals of national importance. The dates are decided on yearly basis as per Hindu calendar. These camps are specially organized for those who are interested in Indian history and culture. This period is also supposed to be auspicious for marriages. Besides local festivals, volunteers will have an opportunity to learn of Hindu as well as Tibetan culture and visit some Monasteries.

Dussehra: Dussehra (Vijaya Dashami, Dasara, or Dashain) is a Hindu festival that celebrates the victory of good over evil. It is a gazetted holiday in India, which is marked on the 10th day of the bright half (*Shukla Paksha*) of the month of Ashvin (*Ashwayuja*), according to the Hindu calendar. During 2017, the main festival falls on 30th September.



The festivities of Dussehra are celebrated for ten days. The preceding nine days to Dussehra are collectively known as 'Navratri' and are dedicated to the worship of Mother Goddess, Shakti. Dussehra is the culmination of the *Navaratri* festival. A short version of the epic *Ramayana in the form of Raamlila* is also performed for 9 days before this festival in Northern India.

Diwali: Festival of Lights is a national festival celebrated throughout the country with lot of zeal for 5 days. This main festival, falling on **19th October, 2017**, is celebrated with a great fervor just like Christmas and goes on for 5 days. Diwali is followed by other local events like Budi Diwali, viswakarma puja, Bhaiya Dooj etc. In North India, as it is believed that it was on Diwali that Lord Rama along with Sita and Lakshmana returned to Ayodhya after killing the Demon king Ravana in Lanka.



Accommodation: Volunteers will live in guest house with simple conditions and share accommodation with other volunteers. All meals will be cooked and served in guest house. A cook will be there but volunteers are expected to help him and occasionally cook their own meals. Self-management is required. Sleeping bag is required, especially, if you are looking for or interested in trekking.

Leisure time: The volunteers will have opportunity to visit the seat of spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama and other historical Hindu temples. Opportunities will be there for short and long treks in the mountains after the camp. During weekend visit to Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab can also be arranged.

International Terminal: New Delhi (320 Kms); **Domestic Terminal:** Gaggal/Dharamshala (15 kms)

Nearest railway station: Pathankot (60 kms). **Participation Fee:** Euro 150.

