



**Happiness is only real
when **shared.****

Chris McCandless | Into the Wild

This is my favorite quote from the movie Into the Wild.

And there is a whole lot of other things what you can share or offer. Maybe start with your most precious: your time.

Seeing all the problems and challenges of the world we always ask ourselves: if there is a solution?
Well, Yes, actually (we can see today...) there is... more than one.

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But we should keep it simple this time...

volunteer

Volunteer work is one of the best, we can do and suggest to do.

Share your time and offer your help unconditionally... for a good cause.

I would like to talk about my story.

I always had two callings in my life: culture and nature.

Three years ago I decided to quit my job as a communications manager at one of the best music venues in Budapest. After a long period entertainment, nevermind how high quality, it was enough...



I wanted to switch full time to what I was doing just randomly: to deal with environmental consciousness, and raising awareness on how to achieve social change.

I wished to learn, study possible solutions and share...

(Ljubljana and) the non-profit, NGO world was calling.

European Voluntary Service at SCI

You are probably familiar with the the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, which provides budget for EU supported long term volunteering.

So, I applied and in the framework of the European Voluntary Service (EVS) I had the chance to spend a wonderful year at the Slovenian branch of SCI.

Our vision is a world of peace, social justice and sustainable development, where all people live together with mutual respect and without recourse to any form of violence to solve conflict.



Service Civil International
strategic plan 2015-18

Founder, Pierre Ceresole | 1920



What is SCI? (The acronym stands for) Service Civil International, a worldwide non-profit organization since 1920, dedicated to promoting a culture of peace, and non-violence. SCI is open to all ages and backgrounds and aims to impact on local and global levels.

SCI has 45 branches all around the world, organizing about 1000 short term, international volunteer projects, so called workcamps.

You can find them in the database at the website workcamps.info.

During the workcamps, usually for 2-3 weeks, 20-30 participants from different corners of the world are working together for such issues as:

disarmament, war remembrance, **pacifism**,
antiracism, **human rights**, solidarity & inclusion,
poverty & social justice, refugees,
gender equality, children, **youth**, elderly,
challenged people, arts, **culture**, disaster relief,
environment protection & **sustainability**.



workcamps.info

One of the strategic objectives of SCI is
To make the world more socially, ecologically and economically sustainable.

(At Zavod Voluntariat) at the branch in Slovenia, among many things, I worked in the office. I designed communication materials, edited videos, so I could develop my creative skills and contributed to raising awareness about active citizenship and volunteering in general.

Moreover, I also participated in some of the local workcamps and projects... We were cleaning a forest trail in the Alpine region to nurture local eco-tourism, we helped to build an urban permaculture garden in a prison, we learnt about which plants could help each other to grow, and I participated in a nature conservation initiative, where we got a taste of shepherding.

SLOVENIA



SCI occasionally has its own budget from projects to finance long term volunteering itself. And that is how I got the opportunity to spend another extra year, now at the International Secretariat, which is the central office of SCI in Antwerp, Belgium.

We were implementing a 2 years long campaign project under the name: [Climate for Peace](#).



Climate for Peace 2014

I cooperated with a team helping the global communication between our workcamp organizers, activists and participants.

As part of the campaign:

- > we implemented trainings on how to lead sustainable volunteer projects
- > we branded and monitored more than 60 thematic workcamps organized according to certain guidelines, which requested such features as for example travel only by land; provide local, seasonal and vegetarian or vegan meals; limit water & energy usage; and introduce low-impact ways of living.
- > activists all around the world organized public seminars, lectures, workshops, and follow-up actions.
- > we also edited and designed a manual toolkit, another publication with a collection of inspiring actions
- > we created a series of documentary videos and
- > we established a [microgrant](#) programme to finance small-scale actions on a local level.

Climate for Peace
TOOLKIT

How to Organize
Sustainable Workcamps



Climate for Peace
INSPIRATIONS

How to organize activities for
climate justice and sustainable living

These works fostered the successful global mobilisation within SCI between 2014-2015 to engage hundreds of volunteers and helped to answer challenges of local, impacted communities. The activities encouraged civil society to get more involved in the topic of climate justice with a focus on learning about and acting on

...ecological disciplines in general, _ nature conservation, renewable energy, climate change adaptation and mitigation, holistic living, small-scale, communal, urban and organic farming, permaculture, eco-villages, or the Transition Town movement, which actually suggests a simple truth: the revolution is getting to know your neighbour.



Climate for Peace 2015



In December 2015, a group of SCI activists joined the events around COP21 in Paris, observing, representing, demonstrating, learning about the latest alternative solutions, getting more inspired and motivated to carry on the fight for a zero carbon society and sharing best practices of responsible living after returning home on their local level, in their own community.

Always keeping an eye on where we could contribute from a grass-roots level to the processes of the global movement, SCI thrives to pave the ways for reaching up to a better world.

It might be interesting to mention: to do an EVS there is an age limit up till 30, while workcamps are for everyone, regardless of age or any other limitation.

And there are also...

Other networks for volunteering as well, where not only youth is welcome.

To mention a few: World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF); The Poosh.org network which gives a professional insight on sustainable building and construction methods; or we could easily discover the Workaway.info website as well.



World Wide Opportunities on Organic
Farms (www.woof.org)
The Poosh.org network
Workaway.info

To sum it up, I would like to emphasize:

Volunteering in general is beneficial for the individual | for the community | for the society...

Volunteering is not about what you gain, it is about what you give!

But actually you DO gain a lot: the feeling of contribution | you learn new skills | you build friendships | you discover your potentials and what happens out of your comfort zone.

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AND There two more things which I like to highlight usually when talking about solutions.

1. I think REconnection with Nature is inevitable. So I suggest: Let's just get into the wild!
Yes of course, with responsibility.

2. I believe sustainability starts from within! We need Inner Transformation.
Grassroots approach, local level, citizens initiatives, yes...
...but we ourselves need to change.

And then Share the change.

Share the change you want to see around!

Share the good example!

...and Share your time.



Thank You

[sci.ngo](https://www.sci.ngo)