

Nature Tourism and Citizen Science Mentor
Port Vila, Vanuatu

This assignment has been negotiated in good faith with the Partner Organisation, and the information contained was correct at the time of acceptance of the request.

However, while we take responsibility for matters under our direct control, all assignments and arrangements are subject to change. This assignment may be amended or withdrawn to reflect changes in circumstances.

GENERAL DETAILS

Assignment Title	Nature Tourism and Citizen Science Mentor
Partner Organisation	Vanuatu Environmental Science Society
Website of Partner Organisation	www.vanuatuconservation.org
Duration of Assignment	24 months
Start Date	April 2020

1. PARTNER ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

Refer to www.vanuatuconservation.org

VESS, a local conservation NGO in Vanuatu, was established in 2014. Since then VESS has successfully applied for several grants for the conservation of threatened species. VESS was the Vanuatu implementing partner for a GEF-funded global Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project, in partnership with the Vanuatu Fisheries Department and the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation from 2015 to 2018. VESS has received grants from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), including a grant to increase awareness of 25 threatened species in Vanuatu, to continue the dugong monitoring and conservation work and to gather information on the little known Bank’s flying fox. In each project a role is written for a Ni-Vanuatu scientist. To date, VESS has employed six local scientists on various projects; currently we have two working for VESS. Since starting VESS has become a recognized stakeholder in the conservation and environment sector in Vanuatu and is invited to stakeholder meetings and consultation by government and projects. VESS was involved in the committee advising on the plastic bag ban, which came in to effect in July 2018.

In summary VESS key programs and activities include;

- Threatened species conservation, currently we have projects for dugongs, turtles and flying foxes.
- Awareness-raising about environmental issues including threatened species and marine litter
- Community participation in conservation activities and data collection.

2. ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW

Tourism is a large sector of the economy in Vanuatu and much of it is based on or takes place in the natural environment. Therefore we see engaging with the tourism sector as important for protecting the natural resources. Tourism can contribute to the conservation of threatened species if conducted in a manner sensitive to the requirements of those species. This requires knowledge of the biology and ecology of these animals and plants and the possible threats to their survival including climate change. Many actors in the tourism industry have little knowledge of the best practices and therefore are unaware that their businesses could be damaging to the environment. This volunteer assignment is essential to bring expertise and experience so the VESS team can be mentored on how to best engage with the tourism industry to encourage people to use best practice in their businesses. This will ensure that their customers leave the smallest environmental footprint on Vanuatu during their stay and will enhance their experience.

In Australia and other developed countries, citizen science has become very popular with the public as they feel they are contributing to the knowledge base and to conservation efforts. However there are few citizen scientists in Vanuatu. We would like to engage the community more in science and the wonder of the natural world. Participation will raise awareness of the plight of the flora and fauna of Vanuatu particularly in the face of climate change and will inspire conservation efforts.

3. ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVES

- 1) Alongside the VESS team, complete the development of the guidelines and codes of conduct for tourism involving wildlife, in particular the turtle, coral reef and bat guidelines.
- 2) Assist VESS to create events and programmes to encourage communities and the public to get involved in collating information about Vanuatu's wildlife.
- 3) To ensure the **inclusion of all people** directly affected by the volunteer assignment in the course of your work with the partner organisation and host community, including implementing strategies that relate to:
 - a. promoting gender equality and empowering women,
 - b. disability inclusion, and
 - c. child safeguarding.

4. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER

In consultation with their line manager and relevant stakeholders, Australian volunteers complete a work plan in the first three (3) months of their assignment. The duties below are an indication of the type of work that may be involved in meeting the Assignment Objectives:

- Develop guidelines and a code of conduct for tourism operators for interacting with marine turtles, coral reefs and other wildlife in Vanuatu, in conjunction with the VESS team and other stakeholders
- Mentor Ni-Vanuatu staff scientists including on how to deliver training the wildlife guidelines for staff at the Department of Tourism and for tour operators.
- Design or adapt citizen science programmes with an emphasis on nature and wildlife for use in Vanuatu, in conjunction with the VESS team.

- Assist the VESS staff to organise events and workshops involving citizen science and to engage the tourism sector and schools to participate.
- Develop and/or maintain partnerships with local, regional and international organisations, local and national government, professional and peer networks

5. SELECTION CRITERIA

Qualifications, Essential Skills & Experience

- Bachelor Degree in natural science. A candidate with a bachelor degree in tourism related subject may be considered if they have relevant experience and knowledge of eco-tourism involving threatened species.
- At least 3 year experience in ecology and conservation or ecotourism
- Previous experience in projects to conserve threatened species
- Experience or knowledge of volunteer programs for conservation of threatened species involving tourists, preferably for marine turtles, but programmes for other animals would qualify.
- Previous participation in a citizen science programme that gathers data on the natural world.
- Strong scientific principles.

Desirable Skills & Experience

- Experience in the NGO sector preferred.
- Experience in designing or implementing nature based citizen science programmes desirable
- Scuba Diving certification would be ideal but competent and comfortable at snorkelling would be a desirable alternative.
- Experience working aboard in a least developed or developing country

6. ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

Line Manager / Supervision

Chief Executive Officer who is also the founder of VESS.

Working Relationships

The volunteer will work with the small VESS team, which consists of young Ni-Vanuatu scientist employed by VESS and students who volunteer for VESS for some activities. The volunteer will mentor the VESS staff and help build the capacity to deliver the objectives of their projects and strengthen the general and organisational skills of the staff.

Hours & Days at the Partner Organisation

7.30 am to 4.30 pm including 1 hour lunch break Monday to Friday to a maximum of 40 hours per week

Leave Entitlements

All volunteers are entitled to 20 days leave per 12 months, unless otherwise advised.

Same conditions and terms as local colleagues apply, including national holidays.

Professional Indemnity Insurance

Professional indemnity insurance is required for all volunteers who are acting as a medical, allied health or legal professional whilst on assignment. On these assignments professional indemnity insurance must be provided by the partner organisation, Australian organisation (if applicable) or self-arranged by the volunteer as part of ongoing professional obligations.

For all other assignments, professional indemnity insurance is not automatically provided for Australian volunteers. You should consult your partner organisation about the need for professional indemnity insurance for your role prior to your departure. Where required and/or you consider it essential for you to hold this insurance, please discuss this with the Volunteer Services Manager in Melbourne prior to your departure.

This assignment is not deemed to require professional indemnity insurance.

Other Conditions

If required to work after hours, volunteer is entitled to time off in lieu because there is no overtime pay provisions.

Language Skills and Level Required

Basic Bislama

Language Support

Language support is provided during the in-country orientation period. Most often, additional resources for further development later in the assignment will be available if required.

7. LIVING AS A VOLUNTEER

Port Vila is the capital and largest city of Vanuatu with a population of approximately 45,000. It is situated on the south coast of Efate Island in SHEFA Province and serves as the tourism and commercial centre of Vanuatu. Port Vila is built around a bay; many areas stretch up the hillsides, offering a combination of stunning harbour views with a faded French atmosphere. Services include daily international flights, phone and internet coverage, quality restaurants and supermarkets and banking facilities. Buses in the form of mini vans, and walking, are the most common modes of transportation.

Temperatures range from warm to hot throughout the year, with a wet season early in the year, at which time the city is prone to cyclones. Swimming, snorkelling, fishing, enjoying waterfalls and playing team sports are commonplace activities.

Cultural Tips

- The national language is Bislama, but English and French are both widely spoken

- Casual, modest, loose clothing is usually acceptable in the workplace and in public. Women may like to consider wearing an “island dress”. Neat, conservative clothing should be worn for formal occasions
- Most Ni-Vanuatu are religious and attend church on a weekly basis. Meetings, workshops, and sports sessions commonly begin and end with a prayer

8. ALLOWANCES & SUPPORT

These allowance levels are based on the Cost of Living in the host country location. Allowances will be reviewed periodically and may increase or decrease. Volunteers will be given notice of any change to the allowance level.

Living Allowance

AUD \$1,910 per month

Accommodation Allowance

AUD \$1,450 per month

Housing

Assistance with the identification of suitable, secure and affordable accommodation will be provided by the In-Country Management Team.

Other Allowances & Support

All Australian Volunteers program volunteers receive the following:

- Pre-departure Briefing in Melbourne
- In-country Orientation on arrival
- Pre-departure vaccination expenses
- Visa expenses
- Pastoral care, assignment monitoring and security guidance
- Return airfare to country of assignment
- Psychological and medical advice and support services
- Re-entry support services
- Settling in allowance (assignments longer than 6 months)
- Re-settlement allowance (assignments longer than 6 months)

9. PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

As a part of your online application you will be required to answer the following questions through a video recording (if you are unable to submit through the online video due to accessibility please contact the Recruitment Coordinator).

Response to Selection Criteria

- a) Why do I feel that volunteering internationally is the right thing for me to be doing at this time in my life?

- b) What are the biggest personal adjustments I'm likely to have to make to be accepted as a useful colleague and engaged community member in this assignment?
- c) The Australian Volunteers Program is committed to ensuring the inclusion of all people directly affected by the volunteer assignment, such as the partner organisation and host community. What is your personal experience and/or understanding of social inclusion.
- d) How do I match the Qualifications, Essential Skills & Experience? Include your most relevant experiences, results and achievements responding to each of the selection criteria in Section 5.

Personal Circumstances Constraints

The Australian Volunteers Program recognises and values the enhanced skills and expertise of returned volunteers as a result of their volunteering experience. The program is also designed to maximise international volunteering opportunities for all Australians. With this in mind, if a returned volunteer and a candidate who has not volunteered previously apply for the same role, preference will be given to the latter, providing they meet the personal and professional selection criteria for the role.

We are NOT able to accept applications from people with the following personal circumstances due to security, cultural, legal or visa restrictions in this location:

- Applicants with a criminal record where a criminal conviction may be relevant to the inherent requirements of the assignment.

10. HOW TO APPLY

All applications must be submitted online through the Australian Volunteers Program website. If you haven't already done so, you will need to register on our website prior to applying.

The Australian Volunteers Program is committed to increasing Indigenous participation, and we actively encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. If you would like more information or support with your application, you can contact our Indigenous Programs Coordinator on indigenous.programs@australianvolunteers.com.