



Hello and thank you for expressing interest in working with Project Play! Whether you are considering filling out our application [form](#) or deciding if you would like to proceed to the interview stage of our recruitment process: we hope this document is able to answer any questions you may have. Should other questions or queries arise that are not answered in the following pages, or if there is anything you would like to discuss in more detail, please email them to our Volunteer and Welfare Coordinator, at recruitment@project-play.org. Please read this document carefully and thoroughly so you have the fullest understanding of Project Play as possible.

Before proceeding, please see our following statements on safeguarding and our commitment to anti-racist practices and our policies on diversity and inclusion. ??????????

Throughout the application process we ask that you be respectful of our ground team. We have busy work schedules in a highly intense environment and so we ask that you email us back in a **timely manner**. We will set deadlines for responses and unfortunately we cannot guarantee spaces if you do not respond/confirm your place in time.

Before applying, we want you to understand that you will be expected to work professionally and in a team of people from different backgrounds and ages. Outside of work hours, you should not expect to be reliant on coordinators or other team members and be prepared to live independently. While we exist as a team, and help each other out when needed, we want you to be aware that you are responsible for yourself, and your own wellbeing.

Essential Criteria

- You are committed to acting in solidarity with People on the Move and to anti-racism practices;
- You are over the age of 19;
- You are committed to safeguarding the people in our care;
- You are passionate about every child's right to play and education;

- You have formal experience of working with children and young people in a paid or voluntary capacity;
- You can provide us with a valid criminal record check prior to your arrival;
- You are available for at least 2 consecutive months;
- You are resilient, hardworking, adaptable, and have an ability to work in a close-knit team;

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Why is there a two month minimum commitment?
2. Where do you work?
3. Where do the Project Play team live?
4. What would volunteering cost me?
5. What does the day-to-day of a Project Play volunteer look like?
6. What does a typical Project Play session look like?
7. What would my role be?
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9. Which languages do volunteers need to be able to speak?
10. How will my wellbeing be affected and what welfare support do you have available?
11. Would I have days off? Can I go on breaks during my time working with Project Play?
12. Are you able to accommodate different access requirements?

1. Why is there a two month minimum commitment?

We ask for a two month minimum commitment in order to support the children with whom we work; we want Project Play sessions to offer consistency and familiarity. This was the time frame that was recommended to us by a specialist psychologist. It can also take a little while to fully settle into life here, so these policies are in place for the betterment of our volunteers too. If you can stay longer than two months, we encourage you to consider this as long-term volunteers are very valuable to our service. If you would require financial aid to stay longer, this can be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

2. Where do you work?

We share a warehouse located in Calais with eight other organisations under the [Calais Appeal](#) umbrella. This is where we store our resources, have meetings and prepare our activities. We work closely alongside the other organisations and share resources, have regular meetings and learn from each other.

Our sessions take place in the informal living sites in Dunkirk, and day centres and safehouses in Calais. The living sites in Dunkirk are large outdoor spaces where people

generally live in tents and makeshift homes. Organisations visit these sites on a daily basis to provide access to food, water and other resources. In day centres and safehouses we run slightly smaller sessions with the children visiting or staying with them.

3. Where does the Project Play team live?

The majority of people volunteering with PP live in our house just outside of Calais, a 30 minute drive from our warehouse. It is a large, 5 bedroom house in the countryside with 2 living rooms, 2 kitchens, 2 bathrooms and a big garden. The house has space for 10 volunteers and we ask everyone to **share a room with 1-2 other people**. You are welcome to join in communal meals but we ask that everyone contributes to cleaning and maintaining the house.

It is important to note that the house is a little isolated. It is a 40 minute walk to the closest town (including shop and train station). We have a few bikes available to borrow but we also encourage you to bring your own if you are able. **All transport to and from the warehouse is guaranteed** in our team vehicles but we cannot guarantee lifts on non-working days. There is a supermarket and pharmacy near the warehouse that can be accessed if needed during the working day.

Although there is plenty of space in the house and we respect each other's privacy, it is a very social house and you will be **living with up to 10 other volunteers**. Furthermore, while we regularly clean the house, it should be expected that living with so many people there could be a little mess.

Please note that this is a **mixed-gender house and not alcohol-free**.

4. What would volunteering cost me?

We appreciate that the costs can be a barrier. If this is the case, please email recruitment@project-play.org in order to discuss **the potential for financial aid**. Please note this is not available to everyone and will be evaluated on a cases-by-case basis. As a small NGO we unfortunately have limited funding and so financial aid is not guaranteed but we will do our best. We prioritise offering financial support to those with lived experience and speakers of the languages used by the communities we work with (Sorani and Kurmanji Kurdish, Farsi, Tigrinya, Arabic, Pashto or Dari).

During your time in Project Play, the main costs will likely be:

- **Your travel to and from Calais**
- **Accommodation:** We ask for a contribution of 155 euros to the first month's rent in our team house and after that first month the house will be free to you.

- **Food:** Our lunches are provided for free at the warehouse by Refugee Community Kitchen (RCK), and this usually includes a vegan option. Therefore it's only breakfast and dinner you must finance yourself.
- **Time Off:** You are very welcome to spend time in the team house outside of work hours and on days off. However, if you would like to travel, visit restaurants, cafes or bars or other forms of amusement, this will be a cost to consider.

5. What does the day-to-day of a Project Play volunteer look like?

In general, our mornings are spent planning and preparing our sessions and having meetings and trainings, and our sessions take place in the afternoon. Here is a more detailed breakdown (please note: this is only an estimated schedule and it will likely vary day-to-day):

9:00: We leave the Project Play house to drive 20-30 minutes to the Warehouse. (Or however long it may take you to travel from your own accommodation).

9:30: We have our daily "Morning Meeting" where we share any important updates, discuss the previous day's sessions and plan our session and packing list for that day.

10:00: Volunteers pack and prepare the activities for the session that day. This may involve unpacking and cleaning equipment from the day before and creating examples and preparing resources. We also have various meetings and trainings throughout the week eg Reflection Meetings.

12:30: We have lunch provided for free by Refugee Community Kitchen in the warehouse.

13:30: We have a brief before our session where we assign our roles and run through key safety information and then drive either to Calais centre or Dunkirk (15-30 minutes away).

14:00: We arrive at the prospective site and begin setting up our session that lasts for 3 hours. More details on our sessions can be found below.

16:30: We start packing up our session.

17:00: We debrief from the session and discuss any action points and vulnerabilities we noticed that require action.

18:00-19:00: We tend to arrive home between these times but it can vary.

All volunteers must spend one day in the warehouse. This is an opportunity to clean and maintain our section of the warehouse as well as complete any admin tasks you wish to eg if you would like to develop resources or research additional training materials.

Due to the ever-changing and fairly unpredictable nature of the situation, there are occasional times when we will run a restricted service which sometimes may result in more time in the warehouse than expected. When this is the case, we will try and find one-off placements in other organisations who are in need of extra help. Unfortunately, this is something out of control and difficult for us to predict when this will happen.

6. What does a typical Project Play session look like?

On any given day the age and number of children that will be part of the session in the different locations is predominantly unknown to us. Usually, we tend to expect around 15 children per session but this can vary depending on the time of year. In winter there tends to be few children whereas in summer we see around 30-50 children in a session. Throughout the year, there can also be times when we arrive to do a session and there are no children at all. As of 2021, children tend to stay for a maximum of 2 months, but usually for a shorter time. This means there is quite a high turnover and so you should expect to meet new children every week, or even every day.

We orient around the idea of "child-led play" and we try to provide as many options for activities as possible in order to encourage agency and autonomy. There are three elements to our sessions. Firstly, we bring a variety of **Free Play** resources such as music, sports, sensory toys, board games, building blocks etc. This is time for entirely child-led play and we try to provide options that can accommodate our age range of 0-18 as well as different interests.

Once we have gathered all the children for our session, we gather for a "**Circle**," which simply involves children and volunteers playing games and singing songs as an entire group, such as: call-and-response songs, name-learning games, and imagination-stimulating role play activities. This helps us to control the energy levels of those in attendance, help foster a sense of community, and encourages self-esteem and confidence. As Project Play volunteers, we must be ready to approach "Circle" with enthusiasm from the get-go and, once you have been working with us for a while, be willing to lead the games we play at this point in the session.

After "Circle" has closed we move onto our "**Main Activity**," which can be anything from a big sports day, to a collaborative puppet show, to a more low-key personal craft. All activities we run on session are designed to target at least one of the following skills: (i) emotional regulation, (ii) participation and collaboration, (iii) self-confidence and self-esteem, (iv) health and self-care, (v) listening and concentration, (vi) creativity, (vii) gross motor skills, (viii) playing and exploring, and (ix) fine motor skills.

Similar to "Circle," all Project Play volunteers must be prepared to eventually take the lead on the activities we run in this portion of the session: setting the resources up appropriately, explaining it to the children, and facilitating their work in whichever way necessary on that day.

7. What would my role be on session and in Project Play?

Ideally, by the end of their time with us, all Project Play team members will be used to taking on responsibility whilst on session. In practice, such responsibility will come in the

form of (i) leading "Circle Time," (ii) taking a lead in explaining and/or setting-up the day's main activity, and (iii) assuming the role of Session Lead on some occasions. For all of these roles, guidance and support will be given to you by the rest of the team and you will never be asked to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable.

You will also have the opportunity to get involved in advocacy, social media and other ways of supporting Project Play. Furthermore, if we have the capacity, you will be able to volunteer with other organisations within the warehouse.

8. I need a visa to arrive in France. Can you help me?

We cannot offer advice or financial support in order to obtain a visa but we are able to provide supporting documents when required. This can be discussed in your interview.

9. Which languages do volunteers need to be able to speak?

Our working language is English, and therefore the only language that all volunteers are required to speak. (explain why) However we strive to be a team that has a wide range of language abilities, and are always particularly looking for speakers of Sorani or Kurmanji Kurdish, Farsi, Tigrinya, Arabic, Pashto, Dari or French. We also encourage all team members to work towards actively improving their speaking skills in any of the mentioned languages before and during their time working with Project Play.

10. How will my wellbeing be affected and what welfare support do you have available?

Northern France can be a challenging place to work for a number of reasons. The work that we do takes place in a difficult context in which witnessing gross injustices is a part of our daily routine. In addition, for those living in the volunteer house, it can become quite intense living and working with the same people every day. Furthermore, it can be harder to maintain self-care strategies they have successfully put in place in the past and you will also be away from the friends, family, or community that might typically provide you with emotional support. The combination of these factors can be overwhelming for some and so prioritising the mental and emotional wellbeing of ourselves *and* our fellow volunteers is a big priority of ours.

Within the Project Play team itself, your Volunteer and Welfare Coordinator will hold regular one-to-one check-ins with you. These will be used to deliver feedback on your work, discuss how you have been finding things in general, chat through anything else that might come up, and make clear the other welfare pathways that are available to you.

We have access to an organisation called Refugee Resilience Collective (RRC), which offers free weekly counselling sessions to all volunteers currently working in northern France. Also, there is a remote individual who has offered their support to Project Play

volunteers specifically; they offer all Project Play team members weekly conversational debriefs that are akin to conversational counselling sessions.

Working with Project Play can be difficult, even though our sessions are often filled with fun and positivity. Thus, whilst the above mechanisms are in place to offer volunteers support, we strongly recommend all prospective volunteers take some time to think about whether working with us for a few months is appropriate for their mental health at this moment in time. In order for the workload to be sustained, the team to cooperate well together both inside and outside of work hours, and for us to provide an effective, impactful service to the children we work with, it is essential we look after ourselves as well – and one part of looking after ourselves is knowing when to take a step back.

11. Would I have days off? Can I go on breaks during my time working with Project Play?

Yes, absolutely! We mandate that all team members have two days off a week, and these are times that **must not** be spent on anything work-related. They offer opportunities to get alone time, decompress your mind, do the things that you love, and relax. Our team day off tends to be Saturdays and you will be assigned an additional day off. You can request a specific day and if possible we will accommodate this but this is not always possible. In general, we ask that you should be **available 6 days a week** (Sunday-Friday).

Furthermore, we mandate that all team members who are staying for a long time go on a **break every three months**. Once the three month period has passed, you must organise a break for yourself that lasts a minimum of three weeks - and this must be reenacted every three months that you are with us. However, it is flexible when you wish to go on break and can be throughout your time in PP.

12. Are you able to accommodate different access requirements?

Yes, but to a **reasonable extent**. We are working in a highly inaccessible field in many ways. Unfortunately, the location of our sessions are not wheelchair-friendly with uneven ground. We also work in a highly stressful fast-paced environment which some people may find challenging. Outside of work hours, volunteers are responsible for themselves and should be able to have the skills to live independently. If you are comfortable, it would be very helpful to the team for you to inform us of your needs so that we can put in a plan to accommodate your requirements before or during your arrival. You can disclose this in the application form, discuss this in the interview or during your first week.

