Wild Coast Schools Volunteer Program

TEACH COMPUTER LITERACY, ARTS AND SPORTS IN RURAL SCHOOLS

Chintsa, Eastern Cape, South Africa

Who Should Apply?

Enthusiastic and committed volunteers looking to enhance the educational experiences of some of South Africa’s poorest learners. This project is also ideal for teaching students looking for teaching practice and people considering a career in teaching or education.

Volunteer Profile

A minimum age of 18 applies for all VA32 placements. Wild Coast Schools volunteers require basic computer skills, good spoken English and the ability to work in a highly motivated team.

This will allow maximum benefit to the project objectives.

Project Summary

The main focus of this project is to teach computer literacy lessons to children in rural Wild Coast schools. Volunteers teach children aged 6-14 years in one of our partnership schools, every morning. There is also the opportunity to be involved in running arts activities with younger children in the school.

Volunteers also take part in afternoon community development initiatives including:
- Sports Development
- Childrens Home of Safety Project
- Gardening Initiative

*The afternoon initiatives change according to current needs in the area and may be different during the time that you volunteer. We guarantee that volunteers will take part in meaningful, productive afternoon initiatives during their time in Chintsa.
The Project
Computer Literacy Skills Development

The Project objectives are to:
1. Equip rural and peri-urban schools with networked computer labs (a multi-phase project) or provide access to a mobile computer lab for regular computer lessons
2. Continue developing appropriate teaching aids and support structures for both teachers and learners
3. Teach basic computer skills in a classroom environment

Background
The rural schools of South Africa have found themselves in the restrictive scenario of “equal education” policies in a country consisting of vastly different levels of development. One of the major areas to be overlooked within the education system is that relating to the technology fields.

Computer Literacy, considered in today’s developed societies as a basic human right, is only in its infancy in the Wild Coast region. In the few schools that have electricity, very few have computers, and those that have computers have been left to develop in a vacuum with inappropriate and non-existent support structures for the maximising of the resource potential they have. VA32 is committed to resource schools with computers and put into place the necessary training and continued support for these schools to allow them to produce competitive learners for the demanding technological world of adulthood.

It is into this challenging and exciting arena that VA32 is appealing to the international volunteer community to support, through appropriate skill provision, for the attainment of these targets.

VA32 currently works with various rural schools in the impoverished Southern Wild Coast area. It manages the labs & computers and teaches over 600 learners from pre-school to primary school.

The Big Green eMachine
The most recent innovative development to the project is a fully self-sustainable 4x4 mobile computer lab that operates on solar power. It is equipped with 11 laptops and a server. This directly addresses the lack of technology in the extreme rural areas.

Furthermore, the mobile lab has proved to be the solution to the lack of space, security risks to assets and the unreliable or nonexistent electricity supply. The “Big Green” allows the Wild Coast Schools Project to expand teaching opportunities, and identifies the potential expansion into adult community classes.

All volunteers are given the opportunity to teach in the Big Green eMachine where possible.
Interactive Sport’s Development

The VA32 sport’s development initiative is an exciting drive to introduce and develop on-going growth and appreciation in the sporting arena in socio-economically challenged areas of the Wild Coast. For the most part, schools lack the resources and the capacity to provide effective sports opportunities for their learners.

It is into this void that the VA32 volunteer team employ their energy, enthusiasm and skill.

The initiative strives towards creating a formal sporting framework where new sport’s disciplines, teamwork and the understanding of sport etiquette are developed. In a country such as South Africa, sport is able to encourage not only a healthy lifestyle, but also develop necessary social skills and peer understanding that is essential to the stability and well-being of our society.

The sports development initiative relies heavily on volunteers to drive this program forwards. Twice weekly volunteers run sports sessions in the village; drills, skills practice and games in football, rounders, rugby, volleyball, netball, cricket and any other sport which appeals. The recently developed Chintsa Sports Centre hosts these sessions with access to a football pitch, netball and volleyball courts.

Gardening Project

Monday afternoon is reserved for gardening! VA32 assist local learners and volunteers in helping to care for the plant and vegetable gardens at Chintsa East School and teach the children how to look after and harvest their plants, flowers and vegetables.

Children’s Home of Safety

Volunteers visit a local Children’s Home of Safety one afternoon a week where extra hands are desperately needed to help the full-time staff in this under-staffed, under-resourced children’s home. Typical activities involve playing sports with the children, structured play, reading and helping children to complete their homework.
Environmental Education & Transforming Learning Environments

The computer literacy curriculum is closely linked to Environmental Education through our innovative & structured teaching modules. Topics covered include My School Environment, Water and Sanitation and the study of indigenous birds and trees amongst other relevant topics.

Volunteer presence in the Chintsa area has also allowed VA32 to partner with the WWF/WESSA Eco-schools programme by providing booster support to existing environmental projects under the guidance of the Eco-schools team. VA32 has become increasingly involved in environmental aspects of the Wild Coast Schools. This partnership continues to grow and involves supporting a range of targets and projects from Marine and Coastal Education, Water and Sanitation and vegetable gardens to general aesthetic improvements, the building of new facilities and playground development.

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Friends of Chintsa - Local Non-Profit Organisation

VA32 and local non-profit organisation Friends of Chintsa work in partnership. The organisation manages any financial donations which are given to the Wild Coast Schools and other projects, and channels them into initiatives which address current social and environmental issues in and around Chintsa.

VA32 volunteers help to support these initiatives through their involvement in programs such as the Wild Coast Schools Project and can get further involved with on-going Friends initiatives during their time in Chintsa.

A few ways to get more involved!
- Join the UNSTRESSED Surf School at the weekend which is run by the local surf community and teaches local children the basics of surfing and ocean awareness
- Assist with the daily running of the Chintsa East Feeding Scheme during school hours
- Be an active part of the regular sports development initiatives going on in Chintsa
Volunteer Life

Orientation

A pre-project familiarisation and orientation, will take place upon arrival in Chintsa. This will involve an introduction to the local area, volunteer routine and house as well as a familiarization chat about life and what to expect in South Africa.

A project specific orientation is also provided before volunteers are placed in the schools. It includes: a project overview, in depth introduction to VA32, introduction to the teaching curriculum, teaching methodology unravelled, lesson preparation, available resources and a day shadowing other volunteers in one of the schools.

Orientation is designed to help volunteers to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible and to understand where their energy and enthusiasm can be used best on project.

Accommodation

VA32 has a volunteer house in the small seaside village of Chintsa East. Volunteers will stay in shared accommodation (two or six per room) in the “vollie” house overlooking Chintsa beach & lagoon. The house is within a few minutes walk of the beach & volunteers will have access to canoes, boogie boards and beach accessories through local backpackers Buccaneers. Accommodation has most mod cons (including daily visits from the monkeys!) and is fully serviced and managed by our house manager Nomakwezi.
Meals

Breakfasts are early and healthy. Volunteers will have access to a self-help breakfast which will include fresh fruit, toast and jams, cereals, tea and coffee. Please note that yoghurt and fried breakfasts are not included.

Lunch is in the form a packed lunch which includes a sandwich and a piece of fruit prepared by house manager Nomakwezi. White and brown bread, cheese, tomato, lettuce, cucumber, jams and peanut butter are available as sandwich fillings.

Dinners are scrumptious, home cooked, sit down meals. These will be prepared by VA32 staff and we cater for vegetarians at all times. Volunteers also have the opportunity to enjoy traditional Xhosa foods at our once off Xhosa Dinner Party. Other theme menus include a Mexican evening as well as a truly South African weekly “braai” (BBQ).

Important Note: Participants must advise VA32 of their dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, allergic to nuts etc.) upon bookings. Participants with very specific dietary needs may be required to supplement their meals at their own expense.

Chintsa

There are several small restaurants and bars in the village that do specials for volunteers. Friday night is “fun night out” as all VA32 volunteers from the different projects usually meet up.

Local tour operator African Heartland Journeys (mother company to VA32) run surf schools, beach horse rides, game drives and quad biking which are all bookable through the VA32 office at a reduced rate for volunteers.

Local backpackers Buccaneers also welcomes volunteers to use their swimming pool, boogie boards, canoes, take part in their afternoon free activities and use their bar. A great place to meet like minded travellers and plan future adventures!

The VA32 Office & Support Centre offers:

- 24 hr personalised contact person
- Professional, full time VA facilitators for planning & mentoring
- Weekly feedback, troubleshooting and planning sessions with co-ordinating team
- Transport to and from projects
- Access to the VA32 internet café and telephone
Program Fees & Dates

We ask all volunteers to arrive on a Monday. The Wild Coast Schools Project does not run during the school holidays — please see the attached date sheet for specific start dates.

The rates sheet is also attached or you can view the most up to date rates on the program webpage by clicking on the “Rates and Dates” tab at: [www.volunteerafrica.co.za/volunteer-with-children-computer-literacy.html](http://www.volunteerafrica.co.za/volunteer-with-children-computer-literacy.html)

What’s included in the program fee?

- Airport transfers upon arrival and departure (Monday arrivals only)
- Accommodation in shared, serviced camps
- Three meals a day whilst on project
- All project related transport
- Support of our experienced on-site project co-ordinator
- Welcome pack with all project info, and meal and drink vouchers for local Chintsa restaurants and bars, 1 free hour internet upon arrival, free VA32 T-shirt

What’s not included?

- Flights
- Personal Insurance
- Snacks, drinks and meals outside of project
- Extra excursions and trips

The Booking Process

Contact us on info@volunteerafrica.co.za or +27 (0)43 738 5523. Our travel and bookings guru Karen will email an application form to you asap. This needs to be filled in and returned to us and upon receipt we will invoice you for a 35% deposit which is needed to confirm your placement on project. The remainder of the fee is due one month prior to arrival.

N.B., You need to inform us of your flight details so that we can arrange for one of the team to pick you up from East London airport.