

International Volunteer Corps

Getting fully involved, for a fairer and more united world

A tailored and coherent involvement

Over 400 people, in 25 countries, are working in ATD Fourth World Movement teams. All of them chose international volunteering:

- **A long-term commitment** – After a few months of discovery, volunteers get involved for several years, without time limitation.
- **Geographical mobility** – Volunteers change teams, responsibilities and even countries, every five years on average.
- **Choosing to share the lives** of people in extreme poverty; very often, volunteers will live in working-class districts, and will try and bond together with people living in difficult conditions.
- **Choosing a simple life** – All volunteers get a small pay, which does not depend on responsibilities or qualifications.

International volunteers come from very different backgrounds, training and age groups. Some of them are religious, others not. Some get involved as couples, others by themselves. Some have been volunteers for over 40 years, others stay only for a few months.

Diverse and complementary missions

Some volunteers' **mission is to be present in poor districts**; through Street Libraries and Festivals of Learning, they meet children and families living in extreme poverty. They are not social workers, and they don't give out material help, but they bond through mutual exchanges, and they try to learn from the experience and spirit of people living in difficult conditions. These encounters are a way of slowly building projects and taking action, while making sure that the primary partners are the people that experience poverty and exclusion.

A great number of volunteers have taken a **mission that brings people from very different backgrounds to meet and exchange**. For example, some are leading Fourth World People's Universities, others are involved in research programs intended to get scholars, professionals and people living in poverty, to work together. They are all trying to acknowledge the know-how and intelligence of people nobody ever usually hears from..

Some volunteers' **missions are to represent and raise awareness**. They work so that public opinion, medias and policy-makers hear people faced with difficulties. In several countries, government-transformation steps are taken in order to have anti-poverty policies benefit from the knowledge of people living in those condition. ATD Fourth World is also part of civil society at the UN and in several other international authorities.



International volunteers often work in more than one of these areas, at the same time. They also share tasks to ensure proper functioning of the organization: office work, building maintenance work, events planning, communication, fundraising, etc. They regularly have periods set aside for training, retrospection and experience sharing.

In practical terms

Discovery training – All volunteers begin with a three-month discovery training period, if possible in their country of residence. During that time, volunteers will join a team and take part in different actions. They learn about ATD Fourth World Movement's functioning, and acquire a first experience that will help them decide for or against a long-term commitment.

Allowance and housing – International volunteers benefit from accommodation (often shared), and from a small allowance. In Canada, the allowance is \$600/month for first year. After that, it is then set at \$900/month after one year. These amounts vary from one country to the next, depending on the local cost of living. Extra amounts are paid to volunteers with dependent children.

Duration – Volunteers commit for an undetermined period. Obviously, they can quit whenever they want, but their project should not be restricted to a few weeks or even a few months. Volunteers should be available in the long run so that the bonds created and the projects developed are part of a continuity.



Missions choice – Missions are determined after discussions between regional and national officials, and volunteers. That choice takes into account teams' needs and ongoing projects; it also depends on the aspirations and skills of volunteers.

How to apply?

There is no need for special qualifications; most of all, international volunteers need to have the desire to meet people living in poverty, to be able to adapt easily and be looking for a strong commitment. Candidates are chosen mainly on their project's consistency and ATD Fourth World Movement's capacity to include new people.

If you are living in Canada, contact the Montreal Team at: 6747 Drolet Street, Montreal, QC, H2S 2T1; Tel: (514) 279-0468; email: atdcanada@atdquartmonde.ca. You can send a letter of motivation or simply make an appointment to meet with us.

If you are living outside of Canada, you can contact ATD Fourth World International Movement at:

<http://www.atd-fourthworld.org/-Join-our-international-team-of-.html>

For more information on ATD Fourth World Movement:

- ATD Fourth World International website: <http://www.atd-fourthworld.org/>
- ATD Fourth World Canada Movement website: <http://www.atdquartmonde.ca/?lang=en>