

Dear volunteer,

We are happy to welcome you to Finland! You will find the infosheet below.

Allianssi Youth Exchanges promotes global awareness and intercultural learning. The ESC volunteer projects are organised together with a local host organisation and co-ordinated by the local camp host and team leader. All the participants are expected to take actively part in team life.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is a vital core value to our organization thus we wish all the volunteers taking part in a volunteer project in Finland take this into consideration. Both the hosts and volunteers should do their best in taking care of i.e. the sorting of the waste, saving energy, not littering, supporting local products and respecting local culture. The little things do matter and so we welcome your contribution and ideas in making the world a better place to live, also in future.

For information on Finland you can have a look on <http://virtual.finland.fi>

For information on Helsinki check <https://www.hel.fi/en> . On these sites you can also find links to other sites about Finland and travelling in Finland.

You are very welcome to visit our page on Facebook! Please like us to browse photos from our volunteering projects etc. <http://www.facebook.com/AllianssiYouthExchanges>

Welcoming wishes,

Allianssi Youth Exchanges team

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Infosheet Suomenlinna ESC volunteering team 31.7.-15.8.25

World Heritage Volunteer Team 2025

Welcome to the World Heritage Volunteer Team in Suomenlinna! Participating in the team will be an important contribution from you in preserving and presenting our World Heritage. The team is organized by the Governing Body of Suomenlinna and Allianssi Youth Exchanges. The Governing Body of Suomenlinna is a government agency that restores, maintains, administers, and provides information about Suomenlinna, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here is a short video (3 minutes) of the Governing Body of Suomenlinna: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kN3Bn1ldQCs>

The project aims at preservation of the World Heritage Site and maintenance of the ecological balance of landscapes. With the help of publicity that the camp gets, organizers aim in raising awareness of World Heritage Site sustainability issues among the visitors as well as local communities and promoting voluntary work and participation for the protection and development of the World Heritage in general.



Photo: World Heritage Volunteers with work supervisors, Susanna Kekkonen

Useful information before your arrival

World Heritage Volunteer Team 2025	2
Useful information before your arrival	3
1. Facts about Finland	4
1.1. Fortress of Suomenlinna in Helsinki	4
2. Useful information about working at the camp	4
2.1. Working for landscape maintenance	4
2.2. Working in cannon restoration	5
2.3. Painting with traditional methods	5
2.4. Getting to know the Baltic Sea better	5
2.5. Open Camp Day and World Heritage around Europe -afternoon Wed 13.8.	5
2.6. Other tasks	5
3. Practical info concerning your stay in Finland	6
3.1. Accommodation	6
3.2. Meals & special diets	6
3.3. Other practicalities	6
4. Free time and other activities	6
5. Climate	7
6. Insurance	7
7. What do you need to take with you?	7
8. Time of arrival / How to get to Helsinki and Suomenlinna	7
8.1. Time of arrival	7
8.2. How to get to Helsinki	8
8.3. Ticket for public transportation from airport	8
8.4. Route	8
9. A short presentation on World Heritage Site in your country + your T-shirt size + allergies	9
10. Contact Information	9

1. Facts about Finland



Finland is located in the Northern Europe between Sweden in west and Russia in East. Finland is a part of Nordic Countries and a member of the EU. Population of Finland is about 5,5 million. The national languages are Finnish and Swedish. Many Finns speak fluent English.

Helsinki, the capital city is located in the southernmost point of the about 1000 km long country.

1.1. Fortress of Suomenlinna in Helsinki

Take a look at this video to get an idea how it looks like in Suomenlinna in different seasons:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONglDfqPeR4>

Fortress of Suomenlinna, built from 1748 onwards on a group of islands, is located a 15-minute ferry ride off the City of Helsinki, capital of Finland. Helsinki is a modern city, home to 600,000 residents. Since 1973, the fortress buildings have been renovated to serve as apartments and workspaces, to house private and public services and for cultural purposes. Today Suomenlinna is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Finland with almost a million visitors / year. But it is also a city part of Helsinki with 800 inhabitants.

If you want, you can check out Suomenlinna website and start following us in social media already before your arrival:

- <https://suomenlinna.fi/en/>
- FB: @Suomenlinna
- IG: @suomenlinnaofficial

2. Useful information about working at the camp

You will be working under supervision of the landscape and restoration professionals from the Governing Body of Suomenlinna. You will work five days a week, approximately 6 hours per day + one-hour lunch break. Work sites are located close to your accommodation, and you will be directed to the point of work by camp supervisors.

2.1. Working for landscape maintenance

Your work will include working for the protection of the fortress landscape. This includes maintenance for example raking of the mowed vegetation and disposal of the invasive species. This kind of work has a significant effect on the preservation of the cultural landscape. The landscape work will take place on several islands that belong to the Fortress of Suomenlinna.



Photos: Volunteers in Suomenlinna, Susanna Kekkonen

2.2. Working in cannon restoration

One task during the 2025 camp will be assisting tasks in restoring the historical cannons of the Fortress of Suomenlinna. The cannons are one of the most visible and best known objects in the fortress and restoring and cleaning them is an important part of the restoration work in Suomenlinna.

2.3. Painting with traditional methods

Suomenlinna is known for its stone walls and structures but there are also a lot of wooden houses and sheds on the islands. One of the volunteering tasks will be to paint one of the old sheds using traditional methods and paints.

2.4. Getting to know the Baltic Sea better

One theme of the 2025 camp will be the Baltic Sea. Suomenlinna is located on islands and the whole City of Helsinki is breathing through the Baltic Sea. We will visit an exhibition about the Baltic Sea as well as maritime archeological excavations. One morning will also be spent picking trash from the shoreline and learning where it actually comes from. Is it the visitors? Or is it something more structural?...

2.5. Open Camp Day and World Heritage around Europe -afternoon Wed 13.8.

On Wednesday 13th August, during the second working week, there will be an Open Camp Day. We will invite local students as well as other stakeholders to join the volunteer team in landscape work. During the afternoon of the same day, we will arrange together a mini seminar about World Heritage sites in your countries! Be prepared for a short presentation. You will find instructions further in this letter.

2.6. Other tasks

The volunteers will also have other tasks in addition to the main tasks mentioned above. Take along some curious attitude and good team spirit!

3. Practical info concerning your stay in Finland

3.1. Accommodation

While in Suomenlinna, you'll stay in Hostel Suomenlinna, shared accommodation in dormitory rooms. Everyone has their own locker for private belongings in the room. Hostel provides bed linen. Read more about the hostel: <https://www.hostelhelsinki.fi/en>

3.2. Meals & special diets

Breakfast will be every day at the hostel. Some days the breakfast is ready made and served, other days you prepare it yourselves. All **lunch** arrangements will be taken care of by the camp organization. Lunch will take place in local restaurants or as take away. **Dinner** time is your time together with other volunteers. Dinner will be prepared by yourselves in a designated dining area from ingredients provided by the camp host. There is a grocery store close by to accommodation where you may also buy snacks and food for other times on your own cost. All details concerning this will be cleared out upon your arrival.

Please inform about special diets to the camp coordinator Aino Osola (aino.osola@suomenlinna.fi) by 13.7.2024!

3.3. Other practicalities

- You will have a laundry room booked for the group 5 times in total during the camp.
- There are showers at the hostel but you also have a chance to take a sauna (with a possibility to swim in the sea) 3 times during the camp, free of charge. The sauna is located in Suomenlinna and the sauna evenings will be Sat 1.8, Mon 4.8. and Mon 11.8.
- Suomenlinna is a fortress island where some services are not at your reach daily but chance to use services such as pharmacy, shops, healthcare centers etc. are just a 15 min ferry ride away. The very basic services like supermarket are found in Suomenlinna.

4. Free time and other activities

Together with partner organizations we will organize free time programs on some of the evenings. There are five museums in Suomenlinna, and they greet you with free admission (1 time/museum). There are also lots of events and exhibitions in Suomenlinna area: <https://suomenlinna.fi/en/>

Your evenings are mainly free, but voluntary common activities can be arranged for those of you who are interested. After a healthy day of hard work in Suomenlinna, it is a quick 15-minute ferry ride to Helsinki City Centre for those of you who will want to explore the Capital of Finland. Take a look at My Helsinki website in case you want to dive into our capital in your free time <https://www.myhelsinki.fi/en>. The camp host will buy 6 Helsinki transport tickets for all of you. If you want to visit the centre more often, you can buy more tickets yourselves.

5. Climate

The weather in August can vary in Finland a lot. Typical days in August are sunny and warm but Suomenlinna is located on a group of islands and that means it can be windy and the weather may change quickly. Temperatures usually stay around 20 degrees Celsius during the day but may occasionally be much chillier. Evenings and nights can be cold. In August there can be occasional thunder. During the past years we have also had some very hot Augusts with 25-30 degrees Celsius temperatures. It is good to prepare for changing weather. You can follow the weather prognosis at www.fmi.fi/en. As a location for your search, please use Helsinki.

6. Insurance

Please bring your European Health insurance Card (EHIC) with you. If you need healthcare you can use the public health services with your EHIC card. European ESC volunteers will be covered by Henner insurance as secondary cover. You will receive the insurance information in your email before the camp starts. Please note that the insurance does not cover personal belongings.

7. What do you need to take with you?

The camp organizers will provide you with work related gear and tools, **but it is mandatory for all volunteers to prepare yourselves with basic and practical work outfit and some other gear concerning accommodation.**

In addition to your personal items, you will have to bring these clothes and gear:

- Practical clothes and proper shoes for outdoor work
- Indoor shoes / slippers for in the hostel
- Clothes for different kinds of weather; warm, rainy, cold, windy.
- Waterproof shoes and raincoat are needed
- Sunglasses and a hat/scarf & sunscreen
- Bathing suit for swimming and sauna
- Towel (no need to carry bed sheets) Two separate towels can be useful if you want to swim in the sea. It is good to have one shower towel and one beach / sea water towel.

8. Time of arrival / How to get to Helsinki and Suomenlinna

8.1. Time of arrival

You will be arriving to Suomenlinna on Thursday the 31st of July. We ask you to arrive at your accommodation at the Hostel Suomenlinna latest at 6 pm but you may get to your room already at 3 pm. It is expected from all volunteers that they will be present on the arrival start on Friday 1st of August at 8:30 am.

The departures can be booked for the Friday the 15th of August. The hostel checkout will be in the morning. **Please note that you have to be present in Suomenlinna 31.7.-15.8.** No later arrivals or earlier departures can be allowed.

8.2. How to get to Helsinki

Please notice that you can arrive to Helsinki without flying. Here are some good tips:

<https://www.hiap.fi/ecotravel/>

8.3. Ticket for public transportation from airport

You need to buy a regional ticket that covers the whole way from Airport to Suomenlinna, 4 - 5 € depending on the method of payment <https://www.hsl.fi/en/tickets-and-fares>. Mobile App recommended, download it to your mobile phone and pay all your public transportation travels with that <https://www.hsl.fi/en/app!>

8.4. Route

Prepare to use two or three different modes of transport to get from the Helsinki Airport to Suomenlinna. Easiest way to find your route to Suomenlinna is to use a HSL Journey Planner at www.hsl.fi/en. Your “From” is *Helsinki Airport*, your “To” is *Suomenlinna*, choose the date and time of your departure and the Journey Planner gives you the best options to travel. You can also follow these practical guidelines and remember, one ticket for the whole journey is enough (when you come straight from the airport).

1 From Helsinki Airport to Helsinki City Centre (Railway station): Take Airport train (or bus) to Helsinki Railway station. Read more <https://www.finavia.fi/en/airports/helsinki-airport/access?navref=main&id=>

2 From Helsinki Railway station to Helsinki Market Square (1,3 km): You can walk or take a tram (2, 4 or 7 all take you near the harbor). If you come directly from Helsinki Airport and your region ticket is still valid, you can use the same ticket for the tram (and HSL ferry)

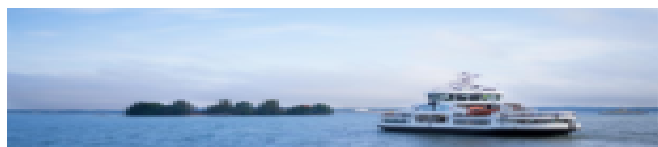
3 From Helsinki Market Square to Suomenlinna: Take the Helsinki Regional Transport (HSL) Ferry to Suomenlinna (Number 19 in HSL app and route guide).

4 Arriving at Suomenlinna: The only stop for the ferry is Suomenlinna. Depart the ferry and enter the Suomenlinna Visitor Centre in the building nearest to the ferry pier, you'll recognize it from the blue Suomenlinna logo. Our staff at the info is present until 6 pm. They can help you in finding your accommodation. In case you arrive later than that, Suomenlinna hostel is located right behind the corner and you'll find more info on their location here <https://www.hostelhelsinki.fi/en>



We assume most volunteers will arrive late afternoon or evening on Thursday 31.7. so there is no organized program, just time to get to know each other and relax. You will have time to get accommodated and then have evening snack in the hostel around 7 pm.

The first on-arrival training day will start on Friday morning at 8:30 am. Before that (8.00-08:30) there is breakfast served at the hostel. The second on-arrival training day will be on Saturday 2.8. Sunday 3.8. is a free day.



9. A short presentation on World Heritage Site in your country + your T-shirt size + allergies

We are also interested in hearing your views on World Heritage and variety of World Heritage Sites in your country. **Please prepare a short (about 10 minutes) presentation of one World Heritage Site in your country, emphasis on Sustainable Tourism.** preferably with some pictures included. There will be a half a day unofficial mini seminar on Wednesday 13th August where you will present these presentations to some of the staff of Governing Body of Suomenlinna and local students. We are sure that all the volunteers are also looking forward to learning from each other's countries' World Heritage Sites. The presentations are informal, no need to take stress in advance! Just choose 1 site from your country, search and save 3 pictures and prepare to introduce your site & tell about challenges and good practices about sustainable visit / tourism at your site.

You will get a camp T-shirt! Please tell your T-shirt size to Aino via e-mail by 13.7!
Inform us about your possible food allergies or special diets in the same email!

10. Contact Information

We hope information in this letter will help you to get prepared and help you to get familiarized with Suomenlinna beforehand. In case you have any questions before your arrival, please contact the camp coordinator Aino from The Governing Body of Suomenlinna:

Aino Osola

Event Coordinator

aino.osola@suomenlinna.fi

Tel. +358 295 338 348

Please notice Aino is on vacation 16.6.-13.7.

You can reach Allianssi Youth Exchanges team by email at volunteer@alli.fi or by phone +358444165209 (weekdays 10-16).

We are eagerly looking forward to meeting you all in Suomenlinna!