



Bothy Venture Volunteer

Venture Scotland is a voluntary organisation that works with disadvantaged young people aged 16-30. The young people we work with face a range of issues including poverty, alcohol and drug misuse, mental health problems, criminal behaviour, homelessness and seeking asylum in the UK.

Venture Scotland offers its participants a personal development programme based in the outdoors. All the young people we work with choose to come on our courses and many get involved with a view to making changes in their lives or to reaching personal goals.

Volunteers work in partnership with professional youth workers to lead our weekend programmes, called Bothy Ventures, which include outdoor activities, conservation and group work. Residential weekends are based at isolated mountain huts (bothies) in the Highlands and in the Scottish Borders. At the start of each six-month programme (Jan-June and July-Dec), we recruit and train new volunteers to help deliver our residential activities.

Why we need you:

To work as part of a team of staff and fellow volunteers to run Bothy Ventures for groups of disadvantaged young people.

What will I be doing?

- Attending a planning meeting in advance of each Bothy Venture so that you are aware of trip logistics and so that you can start to get to know the young people attending.
- Being aware of key health and safety requirements and ensuring that young people are well cared for over the course of each weekend.
- Getting to know participants and supporting them by listening to what they have to say and showing empathy with them.
- Encouraging young people to participate in activities, praising them for their achievements and challenging any unhelpful attitudes or behaviour that they may display.
- Participating in and, when confident and competent to do so, leading fun and engaging group work, conservation and outdoor activities.
- Undertaking your share of cooking, cleaning and management of the bothy.
- Contributing to the evaluation of each Bothy Venture by taking part in a review meeting with the staff/volunteer team at the end of each trip.
- Checking participant and group equipment in and out at the start and finish of each weekend.

What skills and attributes do I need?

- Enthusiasm and energy for running activities and encouraging young people to get involved and try new things.
- A flexible and determined approach for dealing with unexpected or difficult situations such as poor weather or demotivated participants.
- An awareness of the needs of others and a commitment to keeping the group safe at all times.
- A tolerant and non-judgemental attitude.

- An interest in personal development, conservation and/or outdoor activities.
- The ability to work as part of a team with staff and other volunteers.
- A reasonable level of stamina and physical fitness. The journey to our bothy in Glen Etive involves a 3½ hour drive followed by a 45 minute walk through rough terrain. To reach the bothies we use in the Borders, involves a 1½ hour drive and a short walk.
- National Governing Body Awards in outdoor activities (e.g. Summer Mountain Leader Award or canoeing awards) are useful but not essential.
- The ability to drive a car and/or minibus would be useful but is not essential.

How much time do I need to commit?

- You will need to commit to attending an individual induction session, training evening and residential training weekend in advance of volunteering on Bothy Ventures.
- A minimum of two trips per six-month programme or more depending on your availability.
- Most trips take place from Friday evening to Sunday evening. You will also have the opportunity to volunteer on Long Bothy Ventures, which last for five days, if this interests you.
- You need to attend a planning meeting in advance of each trip you are going on (these take place on the Wednesday evening prior to a trip but can be rearranged to suit individual volunteers).

What support will I be given?

- An individual induction session.
- Basic training through an evening session and residential training weekend.
- You will have the opportunity to progress to completing leader training after volunteering during one six-month programme.
- The chance to access relevant external training e.g. John Muir and/or Duke of Edinburgh Award Leader Training and be offered support in achieving National Governing Body Awards in outdoor activities if that interests you.
- One to one support from a designated staff member as and when you need it.
- You will be reimbursed for travel and other relevant expenses.

What benefits can I expect?

- To be part of a dynamic, motivated and outdoor-loving team.
- Satisfaction of making our residential weekends happen and from seeing young people progress.
- The chance to visit the beautiful sites at which Venture Scotland operates.
- The chance to develop skills, experience and confidence in areas including youth work, conservation, outdoor education and general leadership.
- Opportunity to complete the John Muir Awards in conservation.
- A whole lot of fun!

Where will I be based?

- You will have the choice of focusing your volunteering on trips to the bothies we use in the Borders or in Glen Etive or go to both locations! We also run Duke of Edinburgh expeditions across Scotland.

What's the application process?

- Firstly, register your interest in this role by calling our office on 0131 475 2395 or by emailing admin@venturescotland.org.uk
- We will then send you a Volunteer Application Form.
- After you have completed this, we will arrange for you to have an informal interview to discuss the role in more detail.

Please visit www.venturescotland.org.uk for more information about our work.