

VSA Assignment Description

Assignment Title	Samoa's Trail Development Adviser
Country	Samoa
Location of Partner Organisation	Upolu and Savaii
Partner Organisation	Samoa Conservation Society
Duration	6 months
Sustainable Development Goals	



41803

1. Partner organisation overview

Formed in 2013, the Samoa Conservation Society (SCS) is a membership based non-governmental environmental organization dedicated to promoting the conservation of Samoa's biological diversity and natural heritage. SCS works collaboratively with communities, the Government and partners to raise awareness on the state of Samoa's environment and the species within. We further work with schools and youth groups to educate them on the natural heritage that we are blessed with, and actions that can help in species and habitat recovery.

Samoa's biological diversity and natural heritage are constantly being threatened by invasive species, over harvesting and over exploitation, habitat degradation, pollution and climate change. We assist with overcoming some of these challenges through undertaking research, projects and initiatives and partnering with the many organisations in Samoa and abroad.

The mission of SCS is to promote the conservation of Samoa's biodiversity and natural heritage by working collaboratively with partners and communities to (achieve behaviour change via) awareness raising, education and information exchange.

Two of the key objectives for SCS that are directly relevant to this particular assignment are;

- To increase our knowledge and understanding of Samoa's biodiversity and natural heritage through research and cataloguing of existing and new information
- To improve awareness of Samoa's biodiversity through the exchange of information and environmental educational activities

2. Assignment overview

SCS are trying to promote trails and ecotourism in our project villages and other natural sites in Samoa. We have a mission to open up natural areas to visitors and locals alike in order to build pride and passion for conservation as well as income for partner villages.

However, at the current time we do not have the capacity on island to coordinate trails development and maintenance work. The volunteer would trail and mentor a group of "trail makers" who would be responsible for developing new trails and learn how to maintain existing ones at a number of sites on both main islands.



3. Goal/outcomes/outputs

Goal

A trained and competent trail maintenance team with resource and skills to perform trail development and maintenance at multiple sites in Samoa

Outcome 1

A survey of trails to be improved in Samoa

- Assess the conditions of the trails at all project sites
- Determine trail improvements needed at all project sites
- Work with the team to determine priority of improvements across project sites

Outcome 2

Training and capacity building of a Samoa trails maintenance team

- Identify the equipment needed for the trails development team
- Ensure a training programme is in place on maintenance skills using equipment and resources that are readily available
- Supervise the training of the team, including village counterparts in project villages

Outcome 3

Trail improvement to be conducted in selected sites on Upolu and Savaii

- Carry out trail improvements in project sites, depending on budget available
- Ensure the counterparts are trained on the necessary skills to assess when and how best to improve the quality of the trails using available resources.

4. Reporting and working relationships and capacity building

The volunteer will report directly to and will be accountable to James Atherton (SCS President). On a day-to-day basis, the volunteer will predominately work with Forest Restoration Coordinator (Eugene Meleisea) and PES Coordinator (Faleafaga Tipamaa)

The volunteer and SCS will have an ongoing relationship with the VSA Programme Manager and Country Co-ordinator in terms of assignment monitoring, reporting, professional advice and personal support.

As needs on the ground may change over time, the volunteer is encouraged to review and update the Assignment Description on arrival in consultation with the partner organisation and VSA Programme Manager. By their very nature, development situations can involve significant change, so it is advisable that the volunteer periodically review and reflect on the Assignment Description throughout the Assignment to ensure the best development outcomes are being achieved.

5. Selection criteria/position requirements

Person specifications (professional)

Essential

- Proven experience in trail work and
- Training skills of locals with limited experience
- Trail design and implementation skills



Desirable

- Skills/experience in NGO development
- Experience with ecotourism development

Personal specification (personal)

Essential

- Cultural sensitivity
- Flexibility in terms of work focus depending on need
- Willingness to teach and mentor staff and executive board members
- Patience, adaptability and resilience

Desirable

- Keen to be involved in field work and in SCS conservation project activities

6. VSA Essential Attributes

- Commitment to volunteering, to VSA and to the partner organisation
- Cross cultural awareness
- Adaptability and a willingness to approach change or newness positively
- Able to form good relationships, both personally and professionally, with work colleagues and in the community
- Resilience and an ability to manage setbacks
- Initiative and resourcefulness
- An ability to facilitate learning through skills exchange

7. Country Context

For more information about Samoa see;

- [VSA in Samoa.](#)
- Samoan government website: <http://www.samoagovt.ws/>
- Economic overview: <http://data.worldbank.org/country/samoa>
- New Zealand Aid Programme in Samoa: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/aid-and-development/our-work-in-the-pacific/aid-partnership-with-samoa/>

Additional information

Residency status

VSA volunteers must be New Zealand citizens or have New Zealand permanent residency status, and currently living in NZ.

Pre-departure briefing

As part of the volunteer's contract, successful candidates will be required to take part in a pre-departure briefing course run by VSA in Wellington and complete all required pre-reading.

Final appointment

Final appointment will be subject to satisfactory medical and immigration clearances (costs covered by VSA), partner organisation acceptance, and successful completion of the pre-departure briefing course.



Family status

VSA supports partners to accompany volunteers on assignments of six months or longer. However volunteers with accompanying dependents will not be considered for this assignment.

Fundraising

Volunteers are encouraged to fundraise at least \$1000 with the support of VSA's fundraising team. Accompanying partners are encouraged to raise the same amount. All funds raised will help VSA keep its programmes in action and support future volunteers.

Vaccination requirements

Potential volunteers are advised that VSA's insurers require volunteers to be inoculated, prior to departure, in accordance with the instructions of VSA's medical adviser. VSA covers the cost of any required vaccinations.

Children's Act

While on assignment, VSA volunteers may be required to work with children and/or may choose to participate in informal activities in their own time that involve interactions with children (such as coaching teams or teaching English). VSA is committed to the protection of vulnerable children and adults, which also includes meeting our commitment under the Children's Act 2014.

The information requested during the application process is necessary to assist VSA to determine applicant suitability to work and/or interact regularly with children, and is part of a series of pre-selection checks undertaken on all applicants for VSA assignments.

Volunteer package

The volunteer's package includes the following:

Reimbursements and grants

1. Volunteers will receive an establishment grant of NZ\$750 to help them set up in their country of assignment. For volunteers with an accompanying partner (whether or not that partner is also a VSA volunteer), VSA will pay an establishment grant of NZ\$1100 per couple.
2. A resettlement grant of NZ\$200 will be paid for each month the volunteer is on assignment. This is payable on completion of the assignment.
3. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of \$1800 SAT.

Accommodation

Basic, comfortable furnished accommodation will be sourced by VSA. In some circumstances volunteers may be asked to share accommodation.

Airfares and baggage allowance

VSA will provide the volunteer with economy airfares to and from New Zealand for their assignment plus a baggage allowance.

Insurance

VSA will provide travel insurance to cover baggage and personal property, and non-routine medical expenses for the duration of the assignment. Further details of the insurance cover will be provided during the volunteer pre-departure briefing.

Utilities

VSA will reimburse volunteers reasonable expenses for household utilities while on assignment.

Final terms and conditions relating to the specific volunteer assignment will be confirmed in a personalised volunteer contract.

