Guidelines for volunteers
The Helsinki Metropolitan Area Reuse Centre

KIERRÄTYSKESKUS
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Welcome!

It is great that you are interested in volunteering at the Reuse Centre.

This booklet contains basic information about our work and opportunities for volunteers.

You will receive more practical advice from your contact person and on our Siiri intranet when you start volunteering.

Volunteers play an important role in the Reuse Centre’s operations. Every extra hand helps us to do more for the environment and promote sustainable development.

The time you can give us is valuable and we work towards common goals; let’s make sure that volunteering is rewarding for everyone.

Let the good energy flow!

Kind regards,
Juha “Quide” Lehtikuja, Managing Director

“You’ll get more than you give!”

“High spirits and a sense of achievement”

“Nice projects and an opportunity to help with and promote reusing old items”
What is the Reuse Centre?

The Helsinki Metropolitan Area Reuse Centre (Pääkaupunkiseudun Kierrätyskeskus) is a non-profit company. All proceeds are used to maintain and develop its operations.

The Reuse Centre’s goal is to reduce the consumption of natural resources. It thus aims to reduce the amount of waste, promote reuse and raise awareness of environmental issues.

The Reuse Centre has shops in the Helsinki metropolitan area that take in, sell and donate used items.

Items are also repaired, and new objects are made from used materials. The Reuse Centre tries to enhance the public’s awareness of environmental issues by offering information and training. More than 30,000 people receive training every year.

One important part of its operations involves employing people who are out of work or who have partial work capacity. In 2013, more than 400 people were employed at the Reuse Centre in supported employment.

The Association for Finnish Work presented the Reuse Centre with the Finnish Social Enterprise Mark. In addition, the Reuse Centre is a Social Enterprise as recognised by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy.

The Reuse Centre’s mission is to create opportunities and develop the desire to act in an eco-friendly as well as socially and economically sustainable way.

More than 2.3 million objects found new homes through the Reuse Centre in 2013. If these items had been bought new, there would have been almost 26,000 tonnes more carbon dioxide emissions.
Steps for volunteering

You become interested in the Reuse Centre.

You contact us.

We have an informal meeting first.

We find an activity that suits you.

You learn more about your activities and the Reuse Centre.

You sign a volunteer agreement and start volunteering.

You take part in meetings and recreational gatherings, if you wish.

You’re doing an important job!

This is one example of the steps in becoming a volunteer. There are other ways to become a volunteer at the Reuse Centre – for example, people who are involved in short-term projects often jump straight to the last steps. After you contact us, we’ll show you how to become a volunteer!
What can I do at the Reuse Centre?

Lots of things! Volunteers have their own activities at the Reuse Centre. These vary quite a lot, and different shops and services require different things. But you can, for example...

- **Help in our shops and at the sorting centre.** There are many hands-on activities for volunteers in the Reuse Centre’s shops and sorting centre, which really contribute in reusing items and reducing the burden on environment. There are both regular and one-off activities.

- **Support environmental education and advice.** You can help us to spread information about environment through various activities and events that support environmental education and advice. You can, for example, teach handicrafts using recycled materials or help in running environmental clubs.

- **Do arts and craft.** The Handicraft Service Näprä, Environmental School Polku and Plan B sewing shop often have activities that require specific skills or interest in crafts. There are activities in working recycled materials into sewing materials to be used in environmental education.

- **Get involved in events.** Those who like to get involved in projects can help at Reuse Centre events in many ways. We often need people to arrange things, guide participants in crafts workshops or take in donated items.

- **Get involved in workshops.** You can assist at the Reuse Centre’s workshops. The type and amount of activities varies. Come and give old objects a new lease of life!

- **Share your expertise.** Donating your skills or time also supports the Reuse Centre’s operations. For example, offering language courses, translating or consulting can be invaluable help for another person or the environment.

What kind of help is needed right now?

Follow our announcements on our website to find out about volunteering opportunities or get in touch with us.

www.kierratyskeskus.fi/volunteer  vapaaehtoistyo@kierratyskeskus.fi

Most activities require knowledge of Finnish, but you can take part in volunteer activities in English, for example at the Handicraft Service Näprä. Ask the coordinator for more information.
The Reuse Centre’s operations

Shops

The Reuse Centre’s shops sell and give away recycled objects that we have received as donations, that are made of recycled materials or repaired at our workshops.

The sorting centre

Items donated to the Reuse Centre are usually sorted in our sorting centre and then sent out to our shops.

Technical workshops

Household appliances, electronic devices and computer equipment donated to the Centre are repaired and serviced at our workshops. Bikes are repaired for sale in our bike workshop.

Plan B

The Reuse Centre’s collection of products made of reused materials. All products are hand-made and unique, and they are either made of recycled materials or repaired at the Plan B workshop.

Handicraft Service Näprä

Näprä’s recycled crafts materials are sold in the Reuse Centre’s shops. Non-commercial entities can pick up recycled craft materials free of charge from the free wholesale store. Näprä also organises crafts workshops and designs instructions for crafts projects.

Training Service Tuuma

Tuuma offers environmental training and consulting services that provide companies, associations, real estate professionals and other organisations with practical tools and advice on environmental questions.

Environmental School Polku

Polku supports environmental education efforts at day-care centres and schools. It provides a wide range of environmental advice and training. Polku also develops methods and materials for environmental education.

The Reuse Centre operates in Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa. You can find contact information on our website: www.kierratyskeskus.fi
Principles of voluntary work

Values – All of our activities comply with the values of the Reuse Centre. These values are environmental responsibility, genuineness, communality, rationality and empathy.

Volunteering – Everyone volunteers of his or her own free will and as a reward gets to feel good about participating. Volunteers are not paid for their work.

Commitment – Reliability is essential also in volunteering, and it is important to do what has been agreed. Inform your contact person of any changes or hindrances in advance. You are always entitled to stop volunteering if you wish to do so.

Tasks – Volunteers at the Reuse Centre have their own agreed tasks and have a different role than employees. This is to make sure that volunteering is not a substitute for paid work but an activity that supports the goals of the Reuse Centre. Ultimate responsibility always lies with the superior in charge and not the volunteer.

Learning – We will instruct you and introduce you to the activities of the Reuse Centre. You will also have the opportunity to participate in the Ekopassi training sessions.

Certificate – You can get a certificate to recognise your volunteering. Ask your contact person for the certificate.

Insurance – As a volunteer at the Reuse Centre, you have insurance against bodily injuries and damage to property.

Problems – We always aim to solve any conflicts and problems as quickly as possible by discussing them. Problems with customers are always solved by your superior. If necessary, get in touch with your contact person or the coordinator of voluntary work.

Gatherings – Each year, joint events are organised for the volunteers for the purpose of recreation and developing the activities. Volunteers, like everyone else at the Reuse Centre, are invited to all recreational activities and events organised by the Reuse Centre.

Confidentiality – You will agree not to disclose without permission to third parties any confidential information that you become aware of during your voluntary work and that concerns the Reuse Centre, its personnel, partners or customers.

Well-being – Take care of yourself! We all need time off, and nobody has to do and cope with everything.
Cooperation – Take care of others too: be friendly, and do your best to help other volunteers as well as the workers and customers of the Reuse Centre. At the Reuse Centre, volunteers and employees are equal.

Diversity – There are all kinds of people working at the Reuse Centre: we are of various ages and we look different, live in different circumstances, come from different backgrounds and represent different religions and cultures. We accept diversity and respect others.

Joy of doing – Your work is valuable for the environment. Enjoy it with the others at the Reuse Centre.
Practical instructions

Agreement in principle
When you start volunteering, you will sign a volunteer agreement with the Reuse Centre that states the shared principles, your tasks and contact persons. If you do not speak Finnish, please ask if the agreement has been translated into your language.

Siiri intranet
The Reuse Centre has an intranet called Siiri used for internal communication. You can find the latest news, materials, instructions and training information on Siiri. You will receive a username and password for Siiri when you sign the agreement.

Contact persons
If you have any questions, you can ask your colleague or supervisor. If you do not get an answer, you can get in touch with your contact persons. Contact persons are named when you sign the volunteer agreement.

Volunteering hours
You can agree your hours with your contact person. Inform your contact person in advance if you can’t attend as agreed.

Breaks and meals
You will agree on your break times with your contact person and other people working with you. The Reuse Centre provides coffee during your breaks. If you volunteer for five hours or more in one shift, you will be offered a meal. Lunch breaks are 30 minutes. Language course instructors and event assistants are offered a meal on the days when they are volunteering.
**Travel expenses**
If you wish, you can be reimbursed for travel on public transport between your home and the place where you volunteer, on the days that the Reuse Centre has agreed with you that you will attend. You will need a receipt in order to be reimbursed. A single ticket will be considered a receipt. If you pay for the trip with your travel card, you will need a printout of the trips made as a receipt. You can obtain this from the My Travel Card (Oma matkakortti) online service or from an HSL service point. Please mark the trips to the place where you did your volunteer work on the printout. You can find more information on the intranet or from your contact person.

**Equipment**
As a volunteer, you will wear a name badge and are given all accessories you need. If you wear a uniform, you should leave it at the workplace at the end of the day.

**Items**
Items that are donated to our shops are meant to be sold or re-donated, and nobody is allowed to take them.

**Meetings and training**
You can take part in the meetings if you wish. You are also welcome to attend the recreational gatherings for Reuse Centre staff. Volunteers also have their own meetings; the volunteer coordinator will inform you about these. You can find the schedule for the Reuse Centre’s environmental training, Ekopassi, on the intranet.

**Accidents and insurance**
As a Reuse Centre volunteer, you are insured against accidents. The insurance also covers volunteer work that you do at home or at our events. It does not cover travel to the location where you do your volunteering. If there is an accident while you are taking part in our activities as a volunteer, please inform your supervisors immediately. They will tell you what to do.

**Safety**
Safety is everyone’s responsibility. It is the Reuse Centre’s responsibility to make sure that conditions at the Reuse Centre are safe. Everyone must follow the safety instructions and wear the safety equipment that they are given.

**Please note**
Many of the matters mentioned above – such as meetings, the Ekopassi training and Siiri intranet – are mainly in Finnish. If you do not speak Finnish, your contact person or the volunteer coordinator can give you more information about these matters.
Please remember:

Volunteer coordinator:

Hanna Lilja
puh. 050 501 4850
hanna.lilja@kierratyskeskus.fi

Your contact person:

User ID for the Siiri intranet:

Other:

Remember that you can find the latest information on the Siiri intranet.

Follow us on our website and like us on Facebook:
www.kierratyskeskus.fi/volunteer
www.facebook.com/Kierratyskeskus

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www.kierratyskeskus.fi/vapaaehtoiseksi