

PAX is looking for Syrian refugees to volunteer as speakers at schools

ABOUT PAX

PAX means peace. For over 60 years PAX has worked together with people in (post) conflict areas and concerned citizens to build just and peaceful societies across the globe.

In times of war and conflict, PAX works towards protection of civilians whatever their political or religious background. Our peace building work in conflict areas is based on values of human dignity and solidarity with peace activists and victims of war violence. In our peace work, the protection and security of civilians leads our responses to conflicts. PAX also works in Syria. For more information on our work in Syria see these: [link](#) and [link](#).

VOLUNTEER AS SPEAKER!

The project 'Story of a Refugee' aims to give Dutch students insight in dilemma's refugees face as well as knowledge about the conflict in Syria through sharing personal stories. We are looking for Syrians who want to join PAX in achieving this by sharing their personal stories, and become volunteer speakers for this project!

As a speaker you will be visiting Dutch secondary schools (students aged 16-23). During these visits, you will give a presentation in which you share your **personal story**. For example: your daily life in Syria, life under the regime, where you were or what you did during the revolution in 2011 and your personal reasons to leave Syria. It is also important to share information about your journey from Syria to the Netherlands. The presentation finishes with something about your life now, your stay in the Netherlands and vision for the future. We think it is key that students get the opportunity to ask questions and interact with you on a personal level. 'Story telling' is a powerful tool through which sharing personal experiences people can relate, understand, feel empathy or even change their attitudes towards certain topics. In this project this means that Dutch students will get to know the volunteer speaker as a human being instead of a refugee. Apart from these presentations, the project consists of two other elements: a digital 'serious game' in which students gain information about the conflict in Syria and a training for teachers on how to facilitate a nuanced discussion in class. For more information on the project see www.verhaalvaneenvluchteling.nl.

DOES YOUR STORY QUALIFY?

We are happy to hear your stories and almost all stories qualify to join the project. For example, both from people who just arrived in the Netherlands as well as people who have been here for some time already. We are also interested in different refugee stories: if your journey to Europe has been by foot, car, bus and/or boat as well as stories that are by airplane and/or family reunification. Finally, PAX is not a neutral party concerning what is happening in Syria. To us it is important that you feel comfortable with this.

TIME INVESTMENT

You will be visiting schools approximately **twice a month** during weekday's. PAX colleagues will accompany you to the schools. In order to prepare and develop yourself as a speaker, there will be mandatory kick off training on 18,19 and 20 January 2019, as well as voluntary monthly trainings, workshops and meetings with the other speakers.

PROFILE & QUALIFICATIONS

You:

- Are born in Syria and have knowledge about the situation in Syria
- Are currently living in the Netherlands and have a valid residence permit for the Netherlands
- Are willing to share your **personal** story, not only facts
- Preferably were involved in a peace and/or civil society organisation in Syria
- Respect values as non-violence, democracy, diversity, gender equality and human rights
- Are fluent in English or Dutch
- Are flexible and available at least twice a month for half a year. Both for school visits and meet-ups
- Have the ability reflect upon your personal wellbeing
- Are aware and capable to respond to direct or embarrassing questions from students

WE OFFER

- An opportunity to contribute to the discussion about refugees, to tell people about Syria and to contribute to more understanding in Dutch society;
- Training in public speaking, intercultural communication, dealing with emotions, et cetera;
- A volunteer contract and a certificate of participation;
- Compensation and reimbursement of travel costs and other expenses
- Support and accompaniment where necessary.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested? Please send us a short letter in which you explain why you want to participate in the project. Please add a short cv. You can upload these two documents **before the 1st of January 2019 on the website**. Candidates will be invited for an interview in January (between 7 – 11 January). Selected candidates will attend a 3 day training from 18 until 20 January 2019.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on this project please contact Lisa Stumpel (stumpel@paxforpeace.nl). Telephone; +31 (0)30 233 33 46.