



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PROJECTS ABROAD CHINA

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The weather in Shanghai is unpredictable in the midst of these changing seasons. One day it's pretty cold others it's pretty warm. The warm days would be better if the subway stations hadn't cut off the A/C system.

For the volunteers that will be joining us, make sure you are prepared for China's ever changing weather. Light jackets, sweaters and hoodies are the way to go here, as we anticipate China's chilling winter. This is all in our efforts to make your stay here in China a comfortable and amazing one. We look forward to giving you the full Chinese experience and the beginning of worldwide friendships from our weekly socials and various outreach events.



We are going to share two wonderful volunteer stories in this issue: the first one is from Juliette Poissonnier, French volunteer, who recounts her experience at her Journalism Project; and Taras Moskwichow, a German volunteer who participated in the Law Project in Shanghai.

We hope their experiences will provide you with a bit of the variety of projects available here in China, and we sincerely hope these stories will encourage people to join us here too! Meanwhile, if you are interested in what's going on here, you can always check out our Facebook Group, 'Projects Abroad Shanghai, China - The Official Group' or 'Projects Abroad Chengdu, China - Official Group' for more photos or stories; or email any queries and comments to china@projects-abroad.org

If you would love to share your story and experience in China, you can also get in touch with me at suzieli@projects-abroad.org

Hope you have a great month and enjoy your time in China!

Suzie Li
Information Manager

VOLUNTEER STORY

Juliette Poissonnier - Journalism Project



Lorsque j'ai choisi la Chine pour un stage de journalisme, je ne savais pas à quoi m'attendre. Dès le début, on m'a prévenue: "vous n'écrirez jamais sur tout ce qui touche à la politique et au régime chinois". De toute façon, je ne risquais pas de le faire puisque j'étais stagiaire chez iMetro, un magazine de lifestyle, voyage, musique etc. La rédactrice en chef a toujours été très accessible.

Elle savait que j'étais aussi venue pour découvrir la ville de Shanghai. Les autres journalistes travaillaient dur, ne parlaient que très peu et en chinois, mais restaient toujours à l'écoute lorsque j'avais des questions. On m'a par exemple demandé d'écrire un long article sur la France pour la section "Voyages", de ré-écrire le script d'une interview, de chercher les films et albums

qui sortiraient deux mois plus tard en Chine. La partie la plus agréable, en général, c'était les conférences de presse. L'une d'entre elles avait pour sujet l'ouverture d'un grand hôtel dans une région reculée de la Chine, similaire à un autre déjà ouvert à Shanghai. J'ai adoré m'y rendre et découvrir l'importance de ces conférences pour les chinois, bien plus que pour les occidentaux. C'est à celles-ci que se créent les guanxi, les relations professionnelles. On m'a demandé ma carte de visite à plusieurs reprises, certains managers m'ont demandé une photo en ma compagnie... Assez déroutant! Mais plutôt agréable, finalement. Pour moi, le seul point négatif de mon stage était l'absence de fermeté et de délais précis. Parfois, on me demandait d'écrire un article sans me dire quand je devais l'avoir fini, et le lendemain,



on me demandait pourquoi je ne l'avais toujours pas terminé et envoyé.

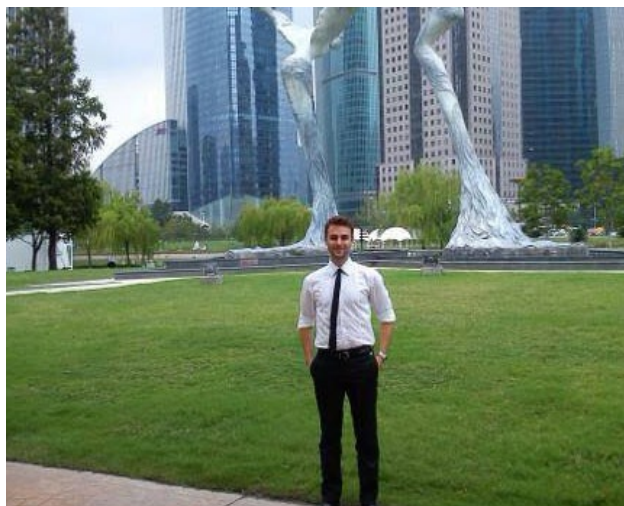
En règle générale, mon expérience à Shanghai a été très positive. J'ai très vite été mise en contact avec les autres volontaires, qui ont tous envie de profiter de leur expérience à l'étranger au maximum. C'est un très bon moyen de découvrir la ville quand on arrive, seul, totalement plongé dans l'inconnu. Au bout de quelques jours, il faut s'obliger à s'ouvrir à tout ce qu'offre la ville de Shanghai. A force de me promener partout, j'ai découvert des petits coins et quartiers très agréables que je n'aurais pas découvert si j'étais restée dans la communauté Projects Abroad. Ceci dit, les événements sociaux, restos et autres qui sont organisés pour les volontaires sont motivants. On écoute les récits des autres, on compare nos expériences... Et on se rend compte de notre chance. Cela peut s'avérer difficile de s'adapter à la culture chinoise. La

manière de parler des chinois, par exemple, peut sembler très agressive. En fait, on s'y fait très vite. Les règles et coutumes des chinois ne m'ont plus paru si étrangères au bout d'une dizaine de jours. On apprend à les aimer, à les adopter parfois. S'il y a bien une chose que je regretterai une fois revenue en France, c'est la cuisine chinoise. Si vous faites l'expérience d'un stage à Shanghai ou à Chengdu, surtout, ne vous limitez pas au Starbucks et au McDonalds. Il y a tellement de plats délicieux à goûter, typiques des différentes régions chinoises... Je ne m'en suis jamais lassée!



VOLUNTEER STORY

Taras Moskvichov - Law Project



It's not a secret that by deciding to go to a foreign country people contribute themselves to a major leap of faith. We can't help ourselves but to imagine what will happen to us in this totally new environment. Will we meet nice people or will we have exciting assignments? I also had my expectations when I was preparing myself for the law internship in Shanghai. In the end, not only my expectations were exceeded, but I lived through times which I will never forget.

The first day at my placement wasn't quite as imagined. After a 12 hours flight I decided to push the limits and not to take a day off. My fatigue probably was defeated by sheer motivation and excitement. When I arrived at my workplace I was introduced to my supervisor, who at once made a good first impression. During my whole internship I met many nice and helpful people. Everyone was very communicative and eager to listen to my opinion. Originally I was assigned to work on a research project for a sports lawyer,

but after some time I found myself working on many different projects, including real cases. The most important thing is to actively communicate with your fellow colleagues. Go to lunch in groups, attempt meetings and offer your help to anyone who might be in need of it and you certainly will have a great working experience. If you are lucky enough you will find friends who will be eager to work with you in the future.

After a day at work I found myself overwhelmed with the amount of things you can do in your free time. There is no chance someone can get bored in Shanghai. My flatmates always had plans for the night and this is where the adventure began. Either it's just a walk on the Bund, a night in the club or just walking around the city, everyone will find something of his or her interest. Shanghai is a place with many faces and you will need a lifetime to witness them all. It doesn't matter if you are looking for a change in your life, working experience or simple inspiration. If you are brave enough to open yourself for a whole new environment, for meeting new people and seeing new places, Shanghai most certainly won't let you down.

FEATURE

Chong Yang Festival



Flourishing Chrysanthemum (Photo by aWee)

The "Chong Yang Festival" is celebrated on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, and it is also known as the Double Ninth Festival. It usually falls in October in the Gregorian calendar.

In an ancient and mysterious book *Yi Jing*, or *The Book of Changes*, number "6" was thought to be of Yin character, meaning feminine or negative, while number "9" was thought to be Yang, meaning masculine or positive. Thus, the number nine in both month and day create the Double Ninth Festival, or Chongyang Festival. Chong in Chinese means "double." Also, as double ninth was pronounced the same as the word to signify "forever", both are "Jiu Jiu," the Chinese ancestors considered it an auspicious day worth celebration. That's why ancient Chinese began to celebrate this festival long time ago.

The custom of ascending a height to avoid epidemics was passed down from long time ago. Therefore, the Double Ninth Festival is also called "Height Ascending Festival". The height people will reach is usually

a mountain or a tower. Ancient literary figures have left many poems depicting the activity. Even today, people still swarm to famous or little known mountains on this day.

On this day, people will eat Double Ninth Gao (or Cake). In Chinese, gao (cake) has the same pronunciation with gao (height). People do so just to hope for progress in everything they are engaged in. There are no fixed ways for the Double Ninth Cake, but super cakes will have as many as nine layers, looking like a tower.

The Double Ninth Festival is also a time when chrysanthemum blooms. China boasts diversified species of chrysanthemum and people have loved them since ancient times. So enjoying the flourishing chrysanthemum also becomes a key activity on this festival. Also, people will drink chrysanthemum wine. Women used to stick such a flower into their hair or hang its branches on windows or doors to avoid evilness.

In 1989, the Chinese government decided the Double Ninth Festival as Seniors' Day. Since then, all government units, organizations and street communities will organize an autumn trip each year for those who have retired from their posts. At the waterside or on the mountains, the seniors will find themselves merged into nature. Younger generations will bring elder ones to suburban areas or send gifts to them on this day.

FEATURE

Voices of the World Club Estabished in China!

Voices of the World is an online global initiative developed by Projects Abroad, the leading global organiser of overseas volunteer work placements. It is a platform (in the shape of an online newspaper and magazine) for young people all over the world to freely express their opinions, desires and aspirations while exploring the vast and fascinating domain of journalism. Through the website, young aspiring journalists from Mongolia or Romania, South Africa, England, France or Senegal (to name only a very few) will have the opportunity to meet and exchange views with one another and in this way to come to understand the world and to express their views on it better and with more empathy.

----from What is Voices of the World?



Members of Voices of the World Club in China

The Voices of the World Club has been recently established in Shanghai, China. Projects Abroad China office cooperate with Shanghai University, and there are six students participate in the Journalism Club currently.

After met with the students on Friday 18th October, the first workshop meeting was on Sunday 27th October.



Voices of the World China: first experience with a volunteer - by Juliette Poissonnier

Sunday 27th was the first workshop of Voices of the World China. Rather than a workshop, it was more a cultural meeting.

As journalism volunteer, I went to share my experience with the students. They were just three, normally 6 people want to participate to this project.

Before China, I was in India and I also participated in Voices of the World. The big difference is in China, students are journalism students and not in India. So, in the end of the meeting, we had to choose some topic for the next workshop (the first real workshop) and it was not easy, because they already know a lot of things. Finally we chose to improve the interview skills. It is the basis in journalism, and it is useful in the life, not just in journalism.

For a first time, the girls were really nice but shy. I had to talk a lot. I think they were curious but dared not ask questions.

We were staying outside, sitting in the grass, in the university in the sun. After a small presentation of each participant, we talked a lot about my Indian experience. We found some cultural difference very interesting.

We didn't see the time past and when it became colder we saw the hour and quickly finish this interesting afternoon.

I'm impatient to be in the next workshop and meet the people who couldn't be there Sunday.

PHOTO PAGE



SOCIAL CALENDAR

<div> < 2013 > </div> <div> ⏪ October ⏩ </div>						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	Dinner	11	12	13
14	15	16	Acrobatics	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Dinner	29	30	31			

PRATICAL INFORMATION

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