

## Frequently Asked Questions by Volunteers/Interns (V/I) at Prerana

**1. What kind of volunteering/interning opportunities are available?**

We engage volunteers depending on the requirements of our direct and indirect beneficiaries and the skill sets of the volunteers. The openings vary depending on the time of the year as well. Hence, we request you to apply for a position as and when you are interested to volunteer/intern. We will do our best to give an opportunity to the applicant but please be mindful that we might not be able to get back to all of you due to the sheer volume of applications.

**2. How should I apply to Prerana to work as a volunteer/intern?**

On the Prerana Website, there is a 'Work with Us' menu option. Select that and fill the volunteer form that comes up on the screen. Alternatively, you can also send us an email at [applytoprerana@gmail.com](mailto:applytoprerana@gmail.com).

In case you are a part of an educational institution and are hoping to intern with Prerana based on your course requirements, we would recommend that you ask your institution to send a letter specifying the expectations from the organization in terms of the work assigned, reporting required and the need for assessments.

**3. How should I contact the Prerana team if I have some doubts during the process of application?**

You can send an email with your concerns at [applytoprerana@gmail.com](mailto:applytoprerana@gmail.com).

**4. Does Prerana accept international students as V/I?**

Yes, Prerana accepts international students if they have the required permissions to work in India in case of roles that are not remote. In remote roles, these permissions are not necessary.

**5. Is it necessary for a Volunteer/Intern to have one's own local guardian/local support system?**

Yes. In case of any emergency especially a health related emergency Prerana can provide only limited support.

**6. What would be my working hours if I volunteer/intern at Prerana?**

The Prerana staff has a full-time working day of 8 hours. Prerana's representatives and the V/I can mutually agree on a prerequisite time commitment but we request you to adhere to the same once you have been onboarded. This is also dependent on the team that you will be working with and the nature of your role.

**7. What would be the leave policy during my volunteering/internship period?**

During the volunteering period, you can take leaves after informing your supervisor. But,

please note these non-working days will not be counted as a part of your volunteering duration.

**8. Will I get a certificate at the end of my volunteering/internship period?**

Volunteers will be provided with a certificate at the end of their volunteering period only if they complete the project assigned to them. In case you need a recommendation letter from the organization, we would request you to inform us beforehand. Like the certificate, the recommendation letter's issuance will depend on your performance.

**9. Will I be able to choose which Team/Project I can volunteer/intern in?**

You are welcome to share your interest areas when you are applying for the opportunity but we primarily take into consideration the requirements of the teams, our beneficiaries and communities. This means that if the team does not require your services, we might not be able to consider your application for that specific team. However, if we feel that your skill sets are suitable for other teams, we might consider your application accordingly. Hence, you might not always have the chance to work in a team based on your preference.

**10. Do I need to provide a reference when I apply to be a volunteer/intern?**

A reference is an added advantage. In case you do not know anyone, who can provide you with a referral, you can still apply to the organization. Please keep in mind that Prerana will do a reference check if you are shortlisted. It is part of our onboarding process.

**11. Does Prerana provide accommodation to V/I?**

No. Prerana does not provide any support with respect to accommodation to V/I.

**12. Will I get the opportunity to interact and work directly and independently with Children?**

Protecting the children and women we serve is of paramount importance to Prerana. We do not allow interns/volunteers to directly interact with the children independently without the continuous and close supervision of the Prerana staff. If you get selected to intern/volunteer with Prerana, it will be a conditional selection until you agree to adhere to Prerana's Child Protection policy. Once we receive a signed copy of this Policy, your role will officially begin. You can get the opportunity to shadow our team during their work with children, but this will be possible only if the children give informed consent.

**13. Can a volunteer connect with the children from the community on social media?**

NO! We strictly prohibit any form of interaction with the children except for professional reasons and capacities. Adding the children on social media will give a volunteer access to their personal information and vice versa which we consider inappropriate and hence prohibit. These rules are a part of our Child Protection Policy which will be shared with you if you are selected to be a volunteer of Prerana.

**14. Can a volunteer provide financial support to the people in the community especially when they ask for it?**

No! If Prerana's beneficiaries reach out to you seeking financial help or help in kind, it is your duty to inform your supervisor about the same. We will ensure that we understand the needs of the family and support them in the best way we can.

**15. Do I have to conduct visits on my own?**

No! You will always be accompanied by one of Prerana's team members if you are required to visit or interact with the members of the communities.

**16. Do I have to pay for my travel expenses?**

No! During the visits, the team member accompanying you will pay for the travel expenses. You are not expected to pay.

## **Understanding Prerana's Work**

**17. What does Prerana do?**

Since its establishment in 1986, Prerana has been a pioneer in anti-human trafficking initiatives in India. We work extensively in the domain of child rights and child protection with the hope of ensuring optimum protection of children. Prerana works to end intergenerational prostitution and to protect women and children from the threats of human trafficking by defending their rights and dignity, providing a safe environment, supporting their education and health and leading major advocacy efforts. We work with children who are victims of sexual violence, rescued from the sex trade and also those rescued from begging and other forms of crimes. To know more about the programs of Prerana you can go here: <https://preranaantitrafficking.org/>. You can also follow our social media handles on:

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

**18. Does Prerana conduct rescues?**

No, Prerana does not directly get involved in rescues. But, if we are aware of any children who are in need of care and protection and are likely to be exploited, we immediately notify organizations that work with the police to rescue or we contact Childline or we notify the police directly. Additionally, we send a letter to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) to alert them about the vulnerable children so that they are informed and can ensure that the child is presented in front of the CWC.

**19. What should I do if my beliefs are not aligned with the beliefs of the organization?**

Prerana's belief and value system is shaped on the basis of the decades of work that the

organization has done on the field. Our beliefs have evolved over time and continue to evolve today knowing that protecting children and ensuring their wellbeing is at the center of our organization. We do not ask any employee/intern/volunteer to shift their belief system because of the organization but we do expect them to be respectful of the organization's experiences and standpoint. We also request everyone to be open-minded enough to engage in conversations so that we can collectively grow and expand our perspectives.

**20. Are there any documents that I should read before I apply to Prerana?**

We have an online resource center where we document all our learnings, best case practices across all programs. If you want to understand Prerana's work in depth before you apply to the organization, we recommend that you go to: <https://www.fighttrafficking.org/>.

We also have a few documents on our website that will help you understand the organization's stand on different issues. i) Child Protection Policy - this document defines how the organization interacts with vulnerable children. Every employee including interns/volunteers are expected to read this document and sign it before commencing their roles. If you breach any of these policies, strict action will be taken depending on the violations. ii) Prevention Of Sexual Harassment Policy - this document helps to ensure that all our employees feel safe in the workplace and none of their rights are violated. Prerana has its own Internal Committees which implement the POSH policy at all of Prerana's offices iii) Gender Equality document - Prerana goes a step further in ensuring that the workplace is as unbiased as possible and we conduct regular sensitization sessions to ensure the same. This document highlights the organizational stand on gender issues and will help you understand Prerana's take on some key issues.

**21. Does Prerana work in the Red Light Areas?**

Prerana started working in the red light areas in 1986 with the objective of putting an end to intergenerational trafficking. Since then, we continue to work in the red light areas of Mumbai & Navi Mumbai - Kamathipura, Falkland Road, Vashi-Turbhe. Our Night Care Centers are based out of these areas. Three of Prerana's first programs continue to be implemented here and thus, a big part of Prerana's work is in the red light areas.

## **Guidance and Mentorship**

**22. What can I expect to learn while volunteering/interning at Prerana?**

The skills that you pick up at Prerana will be dependent on which team you work with. You might learn marketing & communications if you volunteer/intern with the Communications team. On the other hand, you might learn about the situation of commercial sexual exploitation of children, the intervention strategies and the child protection system if you work with the Post Rescue Operations team. Similarly, you will work with different marginalized communities and groups depending on which program you work with.

Prerana has been working with women and children to protect them from the threats of human trafficking by defending their rights and dignity since 1986 and hence, the

organization has a nuanced understanding on this group of marginalized women and children's issues which might help you build your own perspective. Additionally, Prerana also works with victims of child sexual abuse and children living on the streets/in street-like conditions.

**23. Would I be assigned a mentor from the organization?**

The organization understands the importance of the learning process during volunteering/internship. During your volunteering/internship, you will work with a mentor who will guide you through your work within the organization and ensure that you are learning during your volunteering/internship period.

**24. Will I be provided with training before I start volunteering?**

During the process of onboarding, you will be oriented to the work that the teams do, focusing especially on the team that you are a part of. This orientation will help you understand the work of the organization, the programs and the work your team does. Although no specific skill-set training will be given, Prerana will certainly handhold you through the duration of your volunteering/internship period.

## **Post Volunteering**

**25. Can I apply for a job at Prerana after volunteering? Would I be given preference?**

Please feel free to apply to long term positions at Prerana post your volunteering/internship experience. However, keeping in mind that we do receive a large number of applications, the process will be as per our recruitment policy and will be kept fair for everyone.

**26. If I am from an educational institution and want to volunteer in Prerana, will you be able to provide me with a certificate or a letter?**

Considering all educational institutions have different expectations from their students when they volunteer/intern, we encourage you to submit a letter from your institution specifically stating what their expectations are and providing a point of contact from the institution. Additionally, it is essential for you to specify your own requirements from the organization beforehand.

Prerana can provide you with a certificate or an experience letter depending on your performance in the organization.

## **Volunteering/Interning at the Night Care Centers**

**27. What is the age group of children in the Night Care Centers (NCC)?**

Girl children between the ages of 1.5 years and 18 years along with boy children between the ages of 1.5 years and 14 years can be enrolled in the Night Care Centers. Boys above 14 years stay at a separate Night Care Center facility. Please note that both girls and boys can continue to stay in our NCCs beyond 18 years in case the need arises for urgent

shelter requirement. We encourage our clients above 18 years to move into Assisted and independent living facilities like Group Homes.

**28. What are the different activities that children engage in at the Center? Will I get the opportunity to engage with them?**

Children are engaged in different activities at the Centers depending on their age. Children between the ages of 1 year and 5 years are involved in activities like storytelling, drawing, origami, action songs etc. which helps them with their mental and motor development. Children above 6 years have study and school work related classes from 5:30 to 8 PM in the evening. All of them watch television together for 1 hour after which they retire for the day. Additionally, we also conduct life skills sessions, and newspaper reading sessions career sessions, science club activities, stress management sessions during exams, camps during summer vacations. School-going children leave the Centers and go to school in the morning after which they spend time with their mothers in the afternoon. Non-school going children go and spend time with their mothers in the morning and are dropped off at the Centers in the evening. In the past, we have given interns/volunteers the opportunity to engage with our children in the presence of Prerana's staff but this is dependent on the skills of the individual and the needs of the children. Please note that this is only possible after we get informed consent from the children.

**29. Are the Night Care Centers in Red Light Areas? Will I be required to go to Red Light Areas?**

All our NCCs are located in or close to the Red Light Areas of Mumbai and Navi Mumbai. If you are interested in working with our NCC Program and the organization has a requirement, you may be placed in that team. While working in the NCC team, you might be required to accompany the staff to the Red Light Areas and this decision will be taken after a discussion with you. Please be mindful that the purpose of taking you will always be professional and it is not to give you a 'tour' of the areas. Prerana ensures the safety and security of all our staff/ Volunteers/ interns.

**30. Do children have any specific illnesses? Will that affect me in any way?**

We are always alert about the health of our children because of their vulnerable backgrounds. We take all necessary precautions for early detection of any concerns. In case of any health concern that might be contagious, we will prioritize the health and safety of our children while also keeping in mind the safety of our staff. Although Prerana takes every caution not to expose the V/Is to undue unreasonable risk and keeps them informed in advance about any known risk please note that Prerana cannot and does not guarantee your safety.

**31. Do children from the red light areas leave /move out of their community? What do they do after they leave the community?**

Yes, we have seen many children move out of the community in the past. There no pattern

to this. There are several factors due to which children might move out of the community. In some cases, the mother is moved from a brothel in Kamamthipura to another brothel in any other red light area. Sometimes the mother moves out to live with her intimate partner and in other instances the mother moves out because she has decided to leave the sex trade. There are also instances where children are moved to Children's Homes for institutional care. Some youth from the community take a house on rent and move out with their mothers after completing their education. Children might also leave the community for further studies or after completing their education. They usually take their mothers with them. Children from our communities have gone on to pursue diverse professional careers like shipping management, social work, IT etc.

**32. Does the staff face any safety concerns while working in the red light areas?**

Prerana has been working with the children of red light areas for over 3 decades now with requisite permissions and a strong network. The organization is well known for its work which is why the staff has not faced any issues in recent times.

## **Volunteering with the Communications Team**

**33. Can I write blogs about my experience and share it on my personal profiles?**

You can document your personal experiences but it can only be shared after obtaining requisite permissions from the Prerana team. Considering the sensitive nature of the work we engage in; it is necessary for us to ensure that the information being shared outside the organization is appropriate.

**34. What does the Communications Team at Prerana do?**

The Communications Team documents Prerana's activities, learnings, practices and cases on our Anti-Trafficking Online Resource Center ([www.fighttrafficking.org](http://www.fighttrafficking.org)). Additionally, the Team also manages Prerana's social media activities and the digital presence of the organization.

**35. What skills can I learn while working with your Communications Team?**

While working with the Communications Team at Prerana, you can learn about different aspects of Communications for Development (C4D) including marketing and digital communication, designing, documentation in the development sector as well as social media management.

## **Volunteering/Interning (V/I) with Naunihal - Children's Home run by Prerana**

**36. What is Naunihal?**

Naunihal is a Children's Home for girls in need of care and protection that is registered under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015/ JJA-2015 and falls

and functions under the jurisdiction of the Child Welfare Committee, Raigad. The JJA-2015 defines child care institutions as “Children Home, Open Shelter, Place of Safety, Specialized Adoption Agency and a Fit Facility recognized for providing care and protection to children, who require such services”.

**37. Can I V/I at your shelter facility? What is the process to apply for this?**

We can accept V/I at Naunihal if they have the right skills to engage with children. Prerana prioritizes the wellbeing of the children we work with and it is of utmost importance to us to ensure that our children are in the safe company of V/I who are trustworthy and dependable.

On the Prerana’s Website, there is a 'Work with Us' menu option. Select that and fill the volunteer form that comes up on the screen. Alternatively, you can also send us an email at [applytoprerana@gmail.com](mailto:applytoprerana@gmail.com). Additionally, you might be required to fill a separate form for Naunihal and will have to go through an interview process where you will speak to a member from the Naunihal team. A decision will be taken once this process is completed.

**38. Can men volunteer at Naunihal?**

We might give men the opportunity to become a volunteer at our Children’s Home but we do prefer female volunteers considering we have girls in our Home and they feel comfortable around their gender. It is also important to note that Naunihal hires only female staff as full time employees as mandated by Rule 28(4) of the JJ Rules, 2015 which states that in case of CCIs/Homes housing girls, only female Person-in charge and staff can be appointed. Keeping all of this in mind, we prefer female volunteers but are open to male volunteers if we feel they are suitable.

**39. What kind of volunteering opportunities are available at Naunihal?**

V/I are engaged in teaching different subjects, especially English, Science and Math to the resident girls. As the resident girls in Naunihal are fond of music, chess, karate etc. we encourage our V/I to conduct extra-curricular activities and sessions on different topics too. We hope that these workshops and sessions will help in the holistic development of the resident girl children.

**40. Who are the children who stay at Naunihal? Where do they come from?**

Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP) are often placed in Child Care Institutions (CCIs). CNCP refers to children who are found without any home, without any means of subsistence, who have been residing with guardians who are abusive/exploitative, who have a parent/guardian who is unfit to take care of them, who is vulnerable to exploitation, who might have been abused, who are a victim affected by substance abuse, natural calamities, civil unrest etc. This has been elaborately stated under Section 2 (14) of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015. The children come from the same i.e., Raigad district where Naunihal is located or the districts close to Raigad. Naunihal maintains complete confidentiality with respect to the



personal identity of the resident girls. In case you do get accepted as an intern, **DO NOT** indulge in discussions trying to obtain personal details/case details of the resident girls.

**41. What age group do the resident girl children of Naunihal belong to?**

Resident girl children of Naunihal belong to the age group of 10-18 years. There are some young adults who continue to stay in Naunihal under an Aftercare Order from the CWC even after turning 18 years. There have also been cases in the past where we have admitted children below the age of 7 years due to emergencies.

**42. Are the resident girls at Naunihal children 'orphans' or do they have families?**

Legally technically all children in Naunihal are Children in Need of Care and Protection (read section 2(14) of the JJA-2015). Yes, some of them are orphans in the common sense of the term of having no father and mother or family member to take their custodial care.

**43. Do these resident girl children have contacts with their families?**

Children who have families or whose families are known, are encouraged to stay in touch with their families during their period of stay in Naunihal provided it is not against their interests, or staying in touch with them is not dangerous for them. Children can speak with their families once every week and additionally on special occasions. They can also meet their family members at Naunihal once a month. Prerana is a firm believer of the guiding principle of JJA-2015 namely '*institutionalization as a last resort*' and the principle of "*family responsibility*" which indicates that children should not be kept at institutions unless absolutely necessary and must have access to families for their wellbeing.

**44. What happens to the children after they turn 18 years?**

All children need not necessarily stay in Naunihal till they turn 18 years old. In case the CWC assesses that it is in the best interest of the child to be restored to their families, they will pass an order for the same. This decision is taken after a thorough investigation into and reasonable interaction with the family and the child. The restoration of children is taken by the CWC on a case to case basis.

In case children do stay till they turn 18 or in some cases, even after 18, the social worker and the counsellor speak to them on a regular basis to understand their needs, aspirations and future plans. During the period before their 18<sup>th</sup> year, the decision to go back to their families or live separately after they turn 18 is also discussed with the children. Prerana's Case Workers regularly assess the child's safety plan and also guide the children on their personal safety, independent living skills and wellbeing. However, the ultimate decision maker are the young adults themselves. If the child decides to go back to their family and the family is comfortable with taking the child back, the child is restored to the family after all the required legal procedures are completed. If the child decides to not go back to their family, Prerana connects the girls to Aftercare services. In both these cases, Prerana follows up frequently with the child as and when needed to ensure that the child's reintegration into the society is comfortable, safe and the child feels supported.

**45. Do the children at Naunihal go to school?**

Yes, all children at Naunihal are enrolled in schools. To ensure their safety they are escorted to and from the school by the staff of Naunihal. Children who cannot be enrolled into formal school are enrolled in National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). Children who go to college or join vocational training are accompanied for at least a week before they start going on their own.

**46. Can V/I bring gifts or food for the children?**

It is encouraged to have this conversation with the staff at Naunihal before taking the step to purchase gifts. If the children have any requirements and if you feel comfortable supporting them with it, then the necessary steps can be taken. However, we always ensure that some children do not receive any preferential treatment as compared to others. It is important to us that all children receive equal and fair treatment. We are also very particular about the food provided to children. We don't accept food from outside because it can cause health concerns in children. It might also get spoiled by the time it is served to the children since children have a good schedule within the Home that we try to maintain. At Naunihal, all meals that are provided to children are tested by a staff member before to ensure that the food is safe and of good quality.

**47. Can V/I click photographs with the children?**

Prerana's Child Protection Policy does not allow interns/volunteers to click any pictures with the children irrespective of where the pictures might be utilized. It is important to remember that these are Children in Need of Care and Protection and to ensure their safety and wellbeing as per the law (JJA-2015) their identities must not be disclosed. In case of any requirement, please discuss the same with the staff at Naunihal before taking any pictures/videos. Lastly, we are very particular about taking consent of the children before taking their pictures, even when pictures are taken for official purposes. Hence, please be mindful to take their consent.

**48. Can interns/volunteers share their personal details with the children?**

You cannot share your details (includes email ID, phone numbers, address, family background) with the children or stay in touch with the children after the official hours and post completion of your field work/internship. This is a part of our Child Protection Policy which will be shared with you before you are onboarded.

**49. Someone I know is not able to take care of their girl child. Will you be able to admit the child in your Children's Home?**

Please ask the guardian/person responsible to visit a Child Welfare Committee in their jurisdiction. Moreover, you can also notify the CWC as well as call Childline Helpline Number 1098 and report the case. Naunihal only admits children who have been referred by the CWC with an official order.

**50. Can I continue to help and support children at Naunihal even after my volunteering/internship period and if yes, how?**

We encourage the society to take increasing responsibility of the Children in Need of Care and Protection. It is a welcome human quality. After your volunteering/ internship is over you can still support the children of Naunihal financially or otherwise. You can choose to contribute towards their education or vocational training. You can sponsor material needs like stationery, sports accessories, uniforms, shoes, toiletries etc. Alternatively, you can contribute towards the meals of the children or sponsor their health checkups. Since Naunihal is a program under Prerana (a not for profit organization), support is encouraged and useful. You can discuss the same with your supervisor.