

NETWORK FOR VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA



NEWSLETTER

December 2025



YOUTH ACTION FOR CULTURE, COMMUNITY, AND CHANGE



This issue of the NVDA Newsletter highlights a year of meaningful volunteer action, cultural exchange, and community engagement across Asia. As the 2025 workcamp season comes to a close, we look back on programs that brought young people together to support environmental initiatives, preserve cultural heritage, and strengthen local communities.

Inside, you'll find updates from our member organizations, reflections from NVDA interns, and an in-depth interview exploring the journey of youth-led volunteerism. We also feature impact stories from the region, upcoming projects, and key announcements for 2026. Together, these stories reflect NVDA's ongoing commitment to peace, sustainability, and cross-border cooperation.



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WHAT'S INSIDE

WELCOME OUR NEW SECRETARIAT!

NVDA will welcome a new Secretariat starting from December 2025.

Here is a message from Nori, who has worked with NVDA for the past two years, and from Mia, who will be joining as the new Secretariat.



Chanthea KEAT (Cambodian 🇰🇲)

Hello, my name is Chanthea (Mia)! I am a graduate in International Relations with a strong interest in research, geopolitics, and regional cooperation. My passion for civic engagement, the environment, and education closely aligns with NVDA's vision and the meaningful work it carries out. I am truly excited and honored to be selected as a new Secretariat of NVDA.

Before joining NVDA, I completed a three-month internship as a project assistant at CYA, where I also had the opportunity to lead a project

These experiences strengthened my commitment to community engagement and cross-cultural collaboration, and they have motivated me to continue contributing to impactful initiatives. As part of NVDA, I look forward to supporting our programs, coordinating activities, and helping strengthen partnerships across the network. I am excited to learn, grow, and work closely with all of you to further NVDA's mission.

Message From Our Former Secretariat

OHKUSA Noriko

I started working as the NVDA Secretariat in August 2023, when the impact of COVID-19 was still strongly felt, and I have spent more than two years together with you. My memories are filled only with happy moments, but among them, I especially treasure the times at TNW and GA, where I could finally meet members in person, talk face-to-face, and work together with those whom I rarely have the chance to see.

Even within a short period, the situation surrounding IVS continues to change, and we are always required to adapt to those changes. Throughout this journey, seeing all of you move forward while holding onto the ideals of peace and coexistence has always inspired me and given me strength.

Although I will step down from the position of Secretariat, the connections I have made here will not disappear. I know I will visit your countries again, and when you visit Japan or Taiwan, please come and see me. Even if we are far apart, I hope you will stay in touch anytime. I will always be wishing for the continued development of NVDA and all of your activities.



NVDA INTERNSHIP REFLECTION

The six-month internship program, which ran from July to December, is coming to an end. Here are the reflection comments from the interns.



Xuan (HJA, Laos 🇇🇵)

✨ My internship at NVDA has been one of the most meaningful experiences in my life. I gained many skills—communication, design, and time management—but the greatest gift was the support from my team.

♥ At first, I was nervous because everything was new, but Nori, Lee, and all my teammates were incredibly kind, patient, and encouraging. Because of them, we were able to do our work the best we could. They taught me the true power of teamwork and helped me discover my own potential, especially in design.

🌱 To future interns, I truly recommend joining NVDA. You will learn, grow, and create memories that stay in your heart. Thank you, NVDA, and thank you to my wonderful team for giving me this unforgettable opportunity.

♥ NVDA – Thank you for inspiring young people to learn, connect, and create meaningful change together.

Yurin (VYA, Taiwan 🇹🇼)

So far in my internship at NVDA, I have learned many useful skills, such as content creation, video production, and graphic design. I have always been passionate about NGO work, and through these past three months, I have begun to get a sense of what it truly means to “work with the world” ✨.

I am sincerely grateful to NVDA, Nori, my amazing teammates—Lee, Xuan, Kanlaya, Thanny, Film, and Anna—and my home NGO, VYA, for giving me the foundation to pursue these experiences 🌸♥.

🌍✨ My work continues until February, and I look forward to learning even more in the remaining months, carrying these lessons and reflections with me as I continue my journey in international volunteer service.



Thanny (HJA, Laos 🇇🇵)

My internship at NVDA was a valuable opportunity that allowed me to develop practical skills and gain real experience in a professional environment. I assisted with communication tasks, supported event-related work, and helped prepare materials that contributed to the organization’s activities. Through these responsibilities, I improved my writing, creativity, and ability to work under deadlines.

This experience also strengthened my teamwork, adaptability, and confidence when communicating with others. Overall, my time at NVDA helped me grow both personally and professionally, and I am grateful for the guidance and support I received.



NVDA INTERNSHIP REFLECTION

Film (Dala, Thailand 🇹🇭)



Currently, I am going to complete an NVDA Internship in the role of public relations from July to December 2025. I am very grateful to meet other international volunteers to get to know better about culture, manners and unique perspectives based on spotlight learning. I started by helping write the newsletter during my first two months, and that gradually led me to manage the entire publication—from keeping the information consistent to maintaining a unified theme. That work pushed me to reflect on my own approach many times so I could refine it and make the content more engaging for general readers.

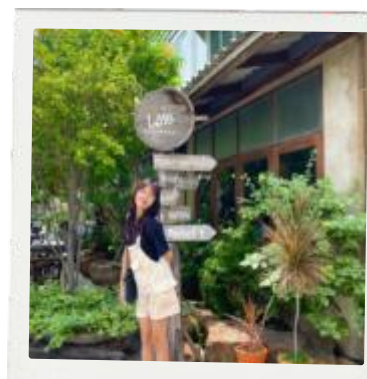
Afterward, I have responsibility for international event posts on social media. It seems slightly easier than previously thought. However, it needs to pay more attention to attract certain people to enroll in the activity, something like this. Thus, all of the six-months that I got you all made me more responsible and deeply understanding of PR roles. See you again for everyone :)

KANLAYA (HJA, Laos 🇱🇦)

My internship at NVDA helped me understand real PR work and how to collaborate with an international team. I worked on publications and social media posts, which improved my skills in content creation, design, and communication.

The support from my mentors and teammates made me more confident and taught me that I don't have to do everything alone.

The most valuable skill I gained is effective communication through writing, design, and teamwork.



I truly recommend future interns to join NVDA. You will learn, grow, and create meaningful memories. Thank you, NVDA, and thank you to my wonderful team for this unforgettable experience. ❤️

Lee (VPV, Vietnam 🇻🇳)



During my internship at NVDA as a PR Team Leader Intern, I had the opportunity to grow both professionally and personally. Leading a team allowed me to develop essential leadership skills, such as task delegation, problem-solving, and motivating team members to work toward a shared goal. I also improved my communication skills by coordinating with volunteers, ensuring that our team's messaging stayed consistent and impactful.



Throughout this journey, I gained a deeper understanding of how effective leadership and clear communication contribute to the success of a project.

Beyond professional skills, I truly valued being part of an organization that supports meaningful volunteer work around the world. It was inspiring to contribute to projects that create positive social impact, and I felt proud knowing that my efforts played a small part in promoting global volunteerism.

2025 KOREAN ISLAND WORKCAMP

By Yonghan KIM - IWO, Korea

The Korean Island Workcamp was held twice in Geomundo on July 28 and August 10, 2025. Geomundo is a small island in southern Korea, and the program—supported by Yeosu City—aims to revitalize rural islands facing population decline by promoting them to younger generations as meaningful travel destinations.

Over eight days, 25 participants from Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America engaged with the local community through various activities. One highlight was the “Youth Global Citizenship Education EXPO” at the island’s only primary school, where volunteers led cultural and educational sessions to help children explore different cultures and understand global citizenship.



Participants collected ten sacks of marine litter and, together with an upcycling artist, turned the waste into 14 sculptures representing their home countries. Now displayed around Geomundo, these artworks add color and creativity to the village. The volunteers also organized a small gathering for 20 residents, sharing international dishes and cultural experiences. The workcamp allowed participants to build genuine connections with local children and villagers. Many highlighted the community’s warm hospitality, as well as the chance to experience Geomundo’s nature and culture up close.



The program reinforced the value of protecting both environmental and cultural diversity. Inspired by this success, preparations are underway for the larger “2026 Yeosu Island Expo,” which aims to involve more people in supporting and revitalizing Korea’s rural islands.

MEMBERS NEWS

KOREA-CZECH YOUTH CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

By Yonghan KIM - IWO, Korea

The Korea–Czech Youth Cultural Exchange Program took place from August 14–20, 2025, in Seoul and Gyeongju. Sponsored by KHNP, Korea's largest electric power company, the program celebrated six years of partnership with the Czech city of Trebic.

To honor this long-standing relationship, KHNP invited students from the Trebic Art School and the Czech youth volunteer team to Korea, with strong support from Trebic City and Gyeongju City.

The program aimed to showcase the cultural heritage of both countries. Czech participants introduced their traditions through performances and hands-on workshops, including music and dance, Easter egg decorating, gingerbread making, blueprint scarf printing, and folk dance. A special joint performance by the Trebic Art School and the Gyeongju Youth Orchestra drew nearly 1,000 attendees.



To deepen their understanding of Korea, the Czech group visited historical sites, sampled traditional and modern Korean cuisine, and explored K-culture—from K-pop to K-beauty. They also joined a volunteer activity, learning to make Kimchi and preparing 20 boxes for local vulnerable communities.

The exchange strengthened the bond among KHNP, Trebic, and Gyeongju, while giving youth participants the chance to proudly share their own culture and experience another firsthand, highlighting the importance of cultural diversity and mutual understanding.



IVS IMPACT STORIES

-These are examples of impact on Members' Projects in 2024 from NVDA annual report-

MNCYA, MACAU



Cultural Heritage & Global Citizenship Programs in Macau - June, 2024

As part of the “Global Citizenship” and World Heritage Conservation theme, this program highlighted Macao's Intangible Cultural Heritage and the traditional beliefs surrounding Nezha. Young volunteers from around the world joined Macao's local youth to participate in heritage conservation activities. Through multi-thematic training sessions, participants combined learning and service, shared community experiences, and developed a deeper understanding of global citizenship while strengthening their awareness of cultural heritage preservation.

The 14th MNYCA Workcamp gathered young people from various countries to explore Macao's city culture and Intangible World Cultural Heritage. The camp provided a platform for cultural exchange, teamwork, and leadership development, helping local youth cultivate a global outlook while encouraging deeper appreciation, mutual understanding, and the preservation of cultural traditions.

VIN, NEPAL

Child Protection Clubs Dates: 2024 and Ongoing

In 2024, Volunteers Initiative Nepal (ViN) strengthened child development efforts in Okhaldhunga and Kathmandu by establishing Child Protection Clubs in 18 local schools. More than 120 students participated in leadership training, community engagement activities, and hands-on learning opportunities. These clubs helped children build confidence, develop essential life skills, and take active roles in addressing local issues. With ViN's guidance, students learned to organize events, collaborate with peers, and contribute positively to their schools and communities—fostering a new generation of empowered young leaders.



IVS STARTING STORIES

VYA at 23rd:

Overcoming Challenges and What We Want to Tell the Youth

By Yurin - VYA, NVDA Intern

NVDA has been sharing a series of stories on how member organizations began their IVS journeys in their home countries. This time, our Taiwanese intern Yurin sat down with Klaus, the founder of Vision Youth Action (VYA) in Taipei, to learn more about his journey and vision.

In the early 2000s, the idea of youth volunteerism in Taiwan was only beginning to take shape. In 2002, under the guidance of Professor Dr. Hsu, Fu-Tung, Klaus and a group of peers traveled to Washington, D.C. to visit nearly twenty nonprofit organizations.

Through conversations with people deeply engaged in civil society, they discovered the passion behind social impact work. They were especially inspired by young Americans interning at NGOs and working on global issues such as poverty and education. This sparked a simple but powerful question: "Why didn't Taiwanese students have similar opportunities?" And so, as Taiwan was just beginning to promote volunteering nationwide, Klaus and his group created something new—a youth-led organization that would open the door for international exchange and global service.

This was the beginning of VYA, born from inspiration, timing, and a belief that young people deserved a place in the world of social impact.



VYA Executive Director Klaus Ding (left)
and Office Director Antonio Chen (right)

From Challenges to Understanding: The Real Life of NGO Work

In the early years, one of VYA's most delicate challenges was learning how to speak to two very different audiences at the same time: the youth and their parents. Crafting a message that could inspire young people—while still reassuring their families—was a balancing act that required more sensitivity than anyone expected. If the copy was too proper, the youth would scroll past without a second glance. But if it sounded too dazzling, parents would worry that the organization was unreliable. Every sentence needed to carry both excitement and trust, and through countless revisions, VYA learned that communication was as much about emotion as information.

Meanwhile, the tools of communication kept changing. What once depended on newspapers or metro papers shifted to emails, then to Facebook, then Instagram, then platforms that moved even faster. Channels evolved so quickly that messages which reached thousands one year could disappear the next under shifting algorithms. The team had to reinvent its approach again and again, often with little recognition for the invisible labor behind each attempt—but these quiet efforts formed the unseen heartbeat of their work.

VYA at 23rd:

Overcoming Challenges and What We Want to Tell the Youth



VYA Program — Taiwanese Youth in Nepal

Through waiting, listening, and sincerely accompanying the youth, VYA slowly found their rhythm—one not shaped by speed, but by understanding.

Putting Yourself in Their Shoes: “What Does the Community Truly Need?”

These lessons became most visible in VYA’s long-term community engagement—one of the earliest examples being Olango Island in the Philippines. There, VYA once ran two projects: the “Chick Raising Project” and the “Mangrove (*Kandelia obovata*) Conservation Project.” Both were built not simply on giving resources, but on understanding what the community truly needed.

The Chick Raising Project taught families to raise chicks responsibly and earn extra income. It was initially successful, but as chicks prices rose, families found it harder to sustain, and the project was eventually discontinued.

The Mangrove (*Kandelia obovata*) conservation Project, however, combined ecology with livelihood: Mangrove prevents erosion, supports marine life, and strengthens fishing and tourism. Over time, the community continued the project on their own—proof that sustainable change grows when guidance aligns with local vision. As years passed, residents came to know the volunteers well. Every summer, even before the team reached the port, locals were already watching and preparing to welcome them.

“We go to the community and do what they do.”
Klaus said.

By living and working side by side, volunteers earned trust before ever asking, “What is your vision for the future?” This immersive, long-term approach helped projects meet real needs and plant seeds of hope that lasted.



Taiwanese volunteers chatting with locals
(*Kandelia obovata* Project)

Looking Ahead: Continuing to Be a Strong Support for Taiwan's Youth

The year VYA was born, it carried only one simple and sincere wish—to help young people in Taiwan truly step into the world. Over the next twenty years, VYA slowly wove a network that stretched across borders.

While Taiwan already had many NGOs, most of them were primarily connected with Southeast Asia. VYA, however, opened doors for Taiwanese youth to engage with Northeast Asia, Europe, Oceania, and beyond. As of January 2025, a total of 12,119 Taiwanese youth volunteers have participated in overseas projects in 60 countries across five continents. Meanwhile, 1,613 young volunteers from 36 countries have joined programs in Taiwan. These numbers reflect not only the scale of VYA's work, but also its role in connecting Taiwan with the world in meaningful ways.



VYA's Global Network

Klaus always said with a smile, "Throw a dart at a world map—wherever it lands, we can probably send you there for a project." Behind that sentence lies countless footprints and stories of youth. They set foot on unfamiliar lands, living and solving problems alongside people from different cultures. And whenever locals heard the word "Taiwan," they would smile and reply, "Taiwan is a great country." In that moment, the connection between Taiwan and the world felt more real than ever. After twenty years, VYA has no reason to stop.

The road ahead is still long, and what VYA hopes to do is to keep these doors to the world open. Maintaining memberships and partnerships with NVDA, CCIVS, SCI, and others takes time and heart, but the effort is worth it—because if one day VYA no longer exists, what young people in Taiwan lose won't just be a chance to travel, but the possibility of discovering the world.

Klaus says his greatest hope is to see more young people carry the warmth of Taiwan out into the world—and bring the world's stories back home. Those experiences, those new perspectives, and those hearts touched by the world will become the softest, yet strongest, parts of their lives.



「你就是改變世界的力量(You are the power to change the world)

— Be the bridge, Be the change. —VYA

Advice for Young People Aspiring to Work in NGOs

Every generation carries its own ideas and ways of doing things. Yet no matter how times change, one principle remains constant: working in an NGO means working with the world. Methods can evolve, structures can be redesigned, but that core commitment—to connect, to collaborate, to walk with others—never fades.

Klaus says that in his early years, he and his colleagues spent countless hours imagining what the next decade of youth engagement might look like. Would international volunteering take on new forms? Would young people participate differently? But the farther he walked, the clearer it became: models will always change, and trends will always shift.



In 2002, the partners who founded VYA

What truly matters is holding on to one truth—wherever you are, you must **“Learn To Work With The World.”** Once that core is set, each generation will find its own way forward.

To young people who dream of entering NGO work, he offers a quiet but essential reminder: “Before you step in, take the time to ask yourself—Is this something you are willing to carry with your life?”

When Klaus returned from the Washington, D.C. and decided to enter the youth development field, he began with a long, honest conversation with himself. He gave his future a “ten-year plan”:

“If I devote myself to this field, who do I want to become in ten years?”、“Can I shoulder the responsibility of running an organization?”、“When challenges arise, do I have the ability—and the willingness—to endure?”、“Do I have the skills to manage people, resources, and progress?”、“If not, am I willing to learn?”



Only after answering these questions did he know he was truly ready to begin. Because in NGO work—or any field that demands heart—what matters most is not what you can do, but who you wish to become. Once you find clarity about that, you can turn back and ask: “What abilities do I need?”、“What connections must I build?”、“What opportunities should I create for myself?” “Find the direction your heart leans toward, and then walk toward it with patience, sincerity, and time.

NGO work is never easy, but if you are willing to walk with the world, it will return to you a life that is deeper, wider, and filled with meaning.

MEMBERS UPCOMING PROJECTS

WORKCAMP: CYA, CAMBODIA ANGKOR THOM COMMUNITY TOURISM PROJECT



Cambodian Youth Action (CYA) launched the Angkor Thom Community Tourism Project (ACTP) — an international volunteer program empowering local communities and promoting sustainable tourism near Angkor Thom, Siem Reap, Cambodia, from January to August 2026.

Volunteers will gain a lot of valuable experience from helping develop eco-friendly village tours, support local artisans in improving handicrafts and marketing, and teach basic English to children at the community kindergarten.

Volunteers will experience a local homestay with basic facilities and enjoy daily meals cooked together with the host family, featuring rice, curry, and fresh local vegetables.

Program Period (2 weeks for each programs)

- ACTP2601: Jan 5 – Jan 17, 2026
- ACTP2602: Feb 9 – Feb 21, 2026
- ACTP2603: Mar 16 – Mar 28, 2026
- ACTP2604: Jul 1 – Jul 11, 2026
- ACTP2605: Jul 20 – Jul 31, 2026
- ACTP2606: Sep 3 – Sep 15, 2026
- ACTP2607: Sep 17 – Sep 29, 2026

DALAA, THAILAND

DALAA WORKCAMP - KIDS HOLIDAY CAMP & SONGKRAN FESTIVAL 2026

Volunteers will spend two inspiring weeks from April 5 to 18, 2026 in Hatyai supporting a lively kids' holiday camp where fun, friendship, and cultural exchange come together. Participants will lead creative games, English-learning activities, and workshops for local children while experiencing simple living in a warm and welcoming rural community.

The program also offers a unique cultural highlight —celebrating Songkran, Thailand's famous water festival, alongside local families. From joyful water fights to temple visits and traditional gatherings, Songkran symbolizes washing away bad luck and welcoming the new year with laughter, renewal, and community spirit.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

➤➤➤ ASIAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE 2026 IS COMING!

Asian Voluntary Service (AVS) is a special NVDA program that brings together young people from across Asia to join community-based workcamps and NGO internships. The program focuses on the environment, rural development, community learning, cultural exchange, and youth leadership. Since 2014, AVS has created opportunities for volunteers to learn, collaborate, and support local communities across the region.

AVS offers a 70-day program, running from **January 11 to March 21, 2026** in Thailand and Nepal, and from **January 19 to March 29, 2026** in Japan, Cambodia, and Laos. During this period, volunteers take part in international workcamps—sometimes as co-leaders—while also supporting the daily activities of host NGOs. They work closely with local volunteers and live within the community, allowing them to experience culture and daily life firsthand.

➤➤➤ GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2026

On December 4th, 2025, NVDA held a meeting with Executive Committee and member organizations to vote on the host of the General Assembly 2026. We are pleased to announce that MOVE Malaysia's application to host the next Training & Networking Week (TNW) and General Assembly has been officially approved.

A total of 14 member organizations participated in the vote, including CYA, DALAA, DJ, GIVE, GREAT, GV4GF, IPYL, MCE, MOVE, NICE, RUCHI, VIN, VT, and VYA. We also received positive messages from organizations that were unable to participate.

The 20th TNW & 21st GA 2026 will be held between 14 - 20 June, 2026, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Please reserve the date. We look forward to your participation!

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Edited by Chanthea KEAT, OHKUSA Noriko, Yurin

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Inquires: Chanthea KEAT, Secretariat : secretariat.nvda@gmail.com