Organising Camp Experiences: A How To Guide
HELLO CAMP MANAGER!

This document will hopefully help you set up your camp experiences. It is a ‘how to’ guide, but will also give you inspiration to develop your own camp experiences. Please let the camp coordinators know if you would like to see any changes. We are here to learn every day.

Enjoy the read.
1 CHOOSING YOUR PURPOSE AND PARAMETERS

The type of camp experience that you create depends on a variety of factors, and every camp works differently. The things that you could consider are:

- What do you want to achieve with your camp? What are your ecological, social and societal goals?
- How many people can you host?
- What sort of work is available for campers to effectively contribute to?
- If you wish to organise an educational experience, consider if you or someone in your network is a suitable teacher to provide the course. The more knowledge and experience the teacher has the more the course will be appreciated.

2 SELECTING THE DATES

There are many different variables to consider when you are thinking about which dates would be best for your event. Think about what the purpose of your event is. Is it to bring lots of people to the land to get lots done? Then pick a time of year when there are jobs on the land that need lots of hands. There may be certain courses that you want to run that teach people about different restoration techniques that are season or weather specific. You may also need to align the timing with when your
teachers are free, or, in the case of hosting corporates, when they are available to come to the camp.

CREATING A PLAN FOR CAMPER FLOW AND EXPERIENCE

The next step is to think about what sort of experience you would like to give your campers, what sort of skills you would like them to bring, and how to reach them and communicate with them.

There are many different types of camping experiences. The ones that we have experience with creating that you could consider are:

- Welcoming local people
  - Getting local people involved in the restoration work is essential to the success of any activity.
- Short term campers
  - Short term (One week to one month visits) for campers who come and stay at the camp and help out with whatever needs to be done at the time, whilst also learning ecosystem restoration techniques implemented all year round. Charging a small fee for food and accommodation is common and encouraged.
- Long term campers
  - Long term (One month to one year visits) for campers who stay at the camp and fulfil a specific role that the camp needs. This can be done as an internship/apprenticeship where the person supports one of the camp members of staff with their work.
- Students
  - Attendees at courses/learning experiences. The most successful courses we’ve run last around 10 days and cover practical and theoretical learning about a restoration topic/topics of your choice. Please see the Camp Course Promo Plan on the Camp Manager Hub page for more information about the best way to work with us to promote your courses.
- Restoration Trainees
There are many people out there who would like to gain some work experience in the field of restoration and regenerative agriculture. They are therefore looking for opportunities to put their theoretical knowledge into practice. Creating a restoration trainee programme that lasts 3-4 months at a time with a fixed cohort that is paid for by the trainees will allow you to earn an income, pay for the materials and tools you need to do the restoration, pay for a camp lead to look after the group and an expert to guide the group. To find out more about this programme, get in touch with your ERC Camp Coordinator for more details.

- **Researchers**
  - Students/researchers coming to the camp to conduct studies. These could relate to our monitoring and evaluation framework or studies that they conduct with more scientific rigour.

- **Visitors**
  - People passing by who want to visit for the day. Try to limit these as they are very time consuming and suggest that people come during allocated visiting times such as open days. Open days are specific days (could be once a month or once every two months) where the camp is open to visitors.

- **Tourists**
  - See the Ecosystem Restoration Holidays point of the Camp Businesses section.

- **Businesses**
  - In some cases, local or international businesses might want to organise an event for their team at your camp. These types of events bring much needed income to your work, but they are also more difficult to organise. If there is interest from companies, and you are open to hosting them, the ERC team will be happy to support you in setting up an experience, including linking you to relevant corporate trainers.
How much and what are the costs involved with hosting people? Think about food, accommodation, teaching, materials needed for the restoration, and marketing costs. Once you have a total amount for what you’ll need, divide that by the number of people you can host and that is how much the experience should cost, at a minimum.

We would recommend charging less if the camp is mainly based on physical restoration work to prevent campers feeling that they need to pay to work, and you can charge more if there is more of a teaching and learning element to it with a range of activities that involve more theoretical learning about a range of restoration topics.

You may consider offering free food and lodging as a payment for specifically needed expertise.

Working out the price of your event involves working out what the costs are that you need to cover to run the event (food, staff time, teachers’ time, materials, marketing budget).

If you are taking advantage of one of our extra support options available to help you co-design and promote your camp experience, you’ll need to add a 7.5% or 15% admin fee onto your cost. You’ll find details of these options in the section called “ERC CAMP EVENT SUPPORT OPTIONS”. The admin fee for this extra support pays for the time of the foundation staff to market your event, to continue supporting the rest of the global movement, and help support the camps in our movement that are unable to host campers.

In order to calculate the total price and to make sure you are following national and international tax rules, we advise you to read the next paragraph very carefully.
VAT considerations

Ecosystem Restoration Camps is focussed on restoring ecosystems worldwide and for that purpose we are set up as a charity. We receive donations to facilitate this work. The Tax Authority in the Netherlands exempts donations from income and Value Added Tax claims.

When a camper makes a payment to a camp to attend a restoration experience Dutch tax law (and most European Tax laws) will consider this payment to be a transactional payment and not a donation. Because it’s not considered a donation, Value Added Tax (VAT) and maybe even profit taxes apply. This is because there is a literal transaction taking place, where someone pays to participate in an activity. The fact the activity contributes to your mission as a charity, is not considered. But, every country is different, and your laws may not require us to ask for VAT on payments, when the supplier (you) does not have to pay VAT. Check with your local tax advisor to see what applies to you! Be aware that you do need a tax number for the transaction.

In the case of the ERC foundation, the Dutch tax authorities definitely treat these types of payments as a transaction and not a donation. To limit the cost to the camper, we can ensure that, for the camper, there is only one transaction. Even though the ERC foundation serves as a platform to link the camper to the camp, the actual transactional relationship is between the camp and the camper only. This means there is one VAT payment to be made to the camp, in line with the camp’s national tax rules. VAT regulations differ around the world, so each camp is advised to find out what VAT rules apply to this type of transaction. Most of the camp experiences are educational, and there may be special rules that apply. In some countries the payment for the sleeping arrangements and food are subject to other VAT rules. Please figure this out yourself.
Calculating your price per camper

1. Calculate your net price (excluding VAT) for: bed, food, staff time needed, overheads, anything else you need to rent/buy for the activity, etc.
2. If you are not taking advantage of one of our extra support options, just add your local country VAT to the net price, and you’ll have your total price per camper.
3. If you are taking advantage of one of our extra support options available to camps (see section called “ERC CAMP EVENT SUPPORT OPTIONS”) then you’ll need add the 7% or 15% ERC admin fee*.

How to calculate this:
Divide your net price by 85 (to get 15%) or 92.5 (to calculate 7.5%). Then multiply the result of that division by 15 or 7.5.

e.g. If your net price is 100 Euro and you’ve selected our support option that requires a 15% fee:

\[
\frac{100}{85} \times 15 = 17.65. \text{ The total net price is now } 117.65 \text{ Euro (your net price of } 100 + \text{ ERCs admin fee of } 17.65).\]

Add the VAT you need to charge on this total price.

e.g. 117.65 Euro + 21% VAT. The total price you will charge your camper is 117.65 + 24.71 Euro VAT = 142.36 Euro

ERC will transfer this amount paid by each camper (through our donations portal) to you, less our 7% or 15% admin fee + ERC VAT (required by Dutch tax law).

e.g. 142.36 Euro less 21.36 Euro (17.65 Euro admin fee + 3.71 Euro VAT) = 121 Euro
The Dutch VAT portion can almost always be subtracted from the VAT you pay to your government.

For camps outside the EU, ERC does not have to charge you VAT, but you may have to still charge your local VAT to your camper. So, you build up the price similarly as an EU camp and our bill to you will just be the 7.5% or 15% and will deduct this from payments received before transferring the amount to you to reduce bank transfer fees.

* Remember that all income to ERC goes straight to our work to support camps in knowledge exchange, communications, camper/camp matching and, as we grow, to donate to your great work!
CREATING YOUR SCHEDULE

Once you've decided how long you want your experience to be, the next step is to decide what you will do together and how many people you are after, you can start creating your schedule. See examples of other camp schedules here and here. Once your schedule is complete, send it to your ERC camp coordinator to be put on your website page.

CREATING YOUR HANDBOOK

We do advise you to create a handbook that explains to the campers what they should expect and how they should prepare for their experience. A good handbook includes:

- Information on the location of the camp and how to get there
- A bit of background about the camp
- Visa stipulations
- Currency
- What to be aware of in terms of the cultural norms and how to respect them
- What the climate is like and what to bring to be prepared
- Information on the health and safety protocols at the camp
- What to bring with you to be prepared for the camp activities
- What the food and accommodation will be like
- What sort of insurance the campers will need
- What your cancellation policy is.

See examples here and here. Once this is complete, send it to your ERC camp coordinator to be put it on your website page.
ADVERTISING YOUR CAMP

Once your website page has been updated with your camp dates, handbook, schedule and some copy about the experience and the costs, you are ready to promote! We will be supporting the promotion of your camp through our social media channels and our newsletters, so please send your ERC camp coordinator some photos and text that we can use to promote your camp experience. We will create an online form on your webpage for people to fill in to show their interest in attending. Please provide us with the email address to where you wish the forms to be sent.

You should also maximise on your own social media channels and other networks to promote the camp experience.

We have discovered that the following process works best for planning and promoting your camp experience:
## Promotional Plan + Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Person Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Put camp dates in the google calendar under Camp Experiences</td>
<td>3 months before camp starts</td>
<td>ERC Camp Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curate the camp experience, course content and costing</td>
<td>3 months before camp starts</td>
<td>Camp manager, but your Camp Coordinator can help with this too #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a handbook and schedule</td>
<td>2 months before event</td>
<td>Camp manager, but your Camp Coordinator and the ERC Comms team can help with this too, and give it a professional design #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw up a cancellation policy</td>
<td>3 months before event</td>
<td>Camp manager, but your Camp Coordinator can help with this too #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp's ERC web page updated with information on new camp experience + handbook + schedule links + interest form</td>
<td>2 months before the event</td>
<td>ERC Camp Coordinator &amp; ERC Comms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># A donations portal set up on camp’s ERC web page</td>
<td>As soon as web page info has been updated with camp details</td>
<td>ERC Comms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add event to website events section</td>
<td>As soon as web page info has been updated with camp details</td>
<td>ERC Comms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Create a short promo video to help sell your camp experience</td>
<td>2 months before the event</td>
<td>ERC Comms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly ERC events newsletter to mention the camp experience and link to camp web page on ERC site for further details</td>
<td>Continued promotion</td>
<td>ERC Comms</td>
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<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details of the camp experience will be shared in the US-based newsletter and Facebook page</td>
<td>In weeks leading up to camp</td>
<td>ERC Comms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum of 4 posts in ERC Facebook and Instagram social media channels</td>
<td>In the weeks leading up to camp</td>
<td>ERC Comms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Paid boosting of 2 - 4 posts on ERC Facebook page to social media audiences appropriate to your camp</td>
<td>In weeks leading up to camp</td>
<td>ERC Comms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post in ERC Facebook Community Page</td>
<td>In weeks leading up to camp</td>
<td>ERC Comms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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# These services are included in our Expanded Service and Full Package Service options available to all camps, at a small cost. See ERC Camp Event Support Options section in this document for details!

As you can see there is some organising and lots of people involved in making a camp experience happen, therefore we hope that you will cherish this process as much as we do. With so many camps already part of the movement we need to be well organised to make it all happen.
You can brief the campers about the health and safety protocols of your camp by preparing them with what they need to bring with them in your handbook. This handbook should be sent to the campers in advance so that they have time to prepare. They may need vaccines to visit your country, as well as bringing the right shoes, clothing and equipment to protect them from the elements/potential risks.

Once they arrive at the camp, make sure on the first day, you go through a health and safety briefing. Like the airplane stewards on a flight, you’ll need to run through all the possible risks associated with your camp’s location and activities (think of: poisonous or dangerous animals, dangerous machines, tools, terrain issues (cliffs, ravines, thorny plants), but also weather (dryness) or water is not potable... etc) and the solutions to those risks. Also make sure you clearly instruct people to keep themselves safe, watch over each other, and take special care when working with tools and equipment.
Make sure you give clear instructions of what to do in case of emergency, and how to protect yourself from risks associated with your camp. Ensure that someone involved in running the camp is health and safety trained, which should include advanced first-aid skills, and the campers know who to go to in case of injury. This should be written in your health and safety policy.

9 COMMUNICATING YOUR EVENT

Camp experiences are what the camps movement is all about and it is what inspires people to follow the lead. Therefore, don’t forget to capture as many moments as possible on camera so that we can share what you’re doing with the world. Photos and videos with captions of what is happening at each camp really helps us to continue inspiring people around the world. It is also vital to receive this content to share your story with our audience, which could lead to an increase in support to your camp. It is very difficult to tell the world about you without visuals and wonderful stories.

We totally understand that during camp events, as the camp manager there is so much to think about and organise that taking photos and videos of everything is not at the forefront of your mind. If you do not have someone on your team that is dedicated to communications, we recommend asking one of the campers to take on the role of Communications Coordinator during the event. If you can offer them a discount on their stay, even better! The responsibilities of the Communications Coordinator would be to take photos and videos of the different activities, number them and add a google doc with the numbers and a caption for each that describes what is happening in the photo/video. Asking them to write a blog about their experience for the ERC website would also be amazing, as well as sending a short report that outlines the experience, what was involved, who was there, what took place, what went well and didn’t go well, and suggestions for improvement.

There are two ways that this content can be sent to us. You can either email or Whatsapp (via your personal camp Whatsapp group) the photos and the google doc with the captions, or you can upload them directly to the communications section of
your google drive folder. Save them in a folder named [Camp Experience _____ MM/YY].

Last but not least, please ask all the participants of the camp experience to sign this privacy Release Form. To make sure everyone feels comfortable with sharing all the content created during your camp experience with the world.

**10 THE CAMPER AGREEMENT**

The camper agreement is an agreement that campers sign when they arrive at your camp to ensure that we can provide a clear agreement of the responsibilities between you and the campers. Make sure you match this agreement to the requirements in your insurance policy. Campers should also sign the Image & Video Release Form to give us permission to use photos of them. You can find an example of a camper agreement that you can use and amend as you see fit on the Camp Manager Hub page of our website.
SURVEYING CAMPERS

Finding out how your campers found their experience and what kind of impact it had on them is important for the continued improvement of the experiences you organise. We have created two surveys for you to send campers after they have visited your camp. The first one has been designed to be sent directly after the camper has left the camp, whilst the memories of the experience are still fresh. The second survey has been designed to be sent to the campers one year after their experience, to assess whether it has changed their lives in the longer term.

The purpose of these surveys is to ascertain whether the campers' skills and knowledge has increased about restoration and other related topics, whether they feel more empowered, inspired and hopeful about the future as a result, and how they found the camp in terms of teaching, facilities etc.

Here is the link to the first camper survey, Camper Survey One, and here is the link to the survey to be sent a year later, Camper Survey Two. The second survey offers you the chance to rekindle interest in your work, and you could even ask for a donation. The results from the surveys will be analysed alongside the ecological data that your camp collects to give an overall holistic picture of the impact your camp is having. This impact will be shared in our yearly annual reports.

ERC CAMP EVENT SUPPORT OPTIONS

Planning a camp experience is exciting, and we're here to support the process and help promote your event!

We realise that not all camps are the same in terms of having internal capacity or expertise to organise camps, or having access to designers, social media staff and a payment portal to collect camper fees. This is why we have three different options available to camps when it comes to supporting events and courses.
Option 1: Pro bono Service

The foundation team is happy to offer this service level for free, as part of our commitment to the success of the camps. This includes:

- Promoting your restoration events and experiences* on the ERC website event platform
- Two social posts on Facebook and Instagram leading up to your event
- The event will also be featured in the ERC events newsletter (this goes out once a month) and we’ll mention your restoration event at the monthly Fireside Chat events
- We will provide you with a clear channel for interested experience/event attendees to contact you and sign up for the experience/event, via our website
- We will provide you with template emails to send to your experience/event attendees before and after the camp event to ensure that they have the information that they need
- We’ll share a template so you can create an event cancellation policy
- Access to our helpful guide on “How to organise a camp experience”
- Access to inter-camp trainings on organising different types of camp events

* Please note these experiences must incorporate a significant component of regeneration for us to promote them

Option 2: Expanded Service

If you’re looking for a bit more support for camp experience development and promotion, this level of support may be the one for you! In order to deliver these extra services, we ask for a 7.5% admin fee* of the total income that is generated by camper sign up fees. In addition to what's included in our Pro bono Service you’ll also benefit from:

- We’ll work out a promotional schedule with you, that includes deadlines for things like providing us with detailed course content
• We’ll co-create digital assets (graphics we can both use to promote the camp on social media)
• We can provide you with a payment portal for course attendees to sign up, using our donations portal on your website page of the ERC website.
• We’ll guide you through writing a cancellation policy so that this is clear for both you and the course participants
• We will send an automated mail to the participants confirming their place at the camp.
• We’ll provide you with a list of signups on a weekly basis, so you can continue communications directly with participants to prepare them for arrival at camp.
• We’ll do four social media posts on our Insta and Facebook platforms (two of the posts with paid boosting to demographic audiences appropriate to your camp)

Option 3: Full Package Service

This includes additional support and services **over and above** what’s included in the Pro bono and Expanded services. In order to deliver these extra services, we ask for a 15% admin fee* of the total income that is generated by camper sign up fees.

Here are the extras you’ll receive:
• We will co-curate the camp experience with you, giving guidance on the course content
• We can connect you with the expertise from the network of the ERC movement to enrich the experience you create
• We’ll draw up a camp schedule together, based on successful past camp events
• We will support you in creating a handbook for course/experience attendees that outlines what they can expect and practical information that they need to attend
• We’ll give you access to a camper welcome video from John D. Liu to screen at camp
• We’ll work with you to create a short promo video for social media purposes

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*Admin fee is based on the total income generated by camper sign up fees.
• We’ll do four social media posts on our Insta and Facebook platforms (all four posts with paid boosting to demographic audiences appropriate to your camp)

* The fee that we receive from you in return for our Expanded Service and Full Package Service will be reinvested back into the movement to fund the continuation of the range of services we offer camps around the world

# We retain cancellation fees until after the refund period has lapsed to cover any refund claims

Next steps?

Contact your Camp Coordinator once you’re ready to create your camp experience, to discuss which support option you’d like to take advantage of!
TOGETHER, WE ARE RESTORING THE EARTH

www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org