

# Internship at Eden

## Introduction & Background

Eden is an Irish farmed animal sanctuary that is home to approximately 100 residents. All the animal residents have been rescued from situations of abuse, neglect, abandonment or exploitation.

Eden is run by one person, its Founder and Director, Sandra Higgins, with the help of volunteers, and from time to time, paid contract staff.

An internship at Eden is, therefore, a unique opportunity to train in a wide variety of aspects of sanctuary management, to gain an overview of running a sanctuary, as well as training in the day to day care of sanctuary residents.

Eden offers the opportunity to learn about the care of rescued farmed animals and about sanctuary work in a European country that is dominated by, and deeply entrenched in, speciesism and animal agriculture. At Eden we regard the freedom of other animals from human exploitation and the total abolition of human use of other animals, as the most important social justice issue of our time. This is reflected in our work, much of which is dedicated to animal rights and vegan education at Eden's sister organization, Matilda's Promise.

As Eden is a relatively small sanctuary with current capacity for only about 110 residents, an internship offers the privilege of working with and getting to know the individual residents' personalities and histories and to be a part of the team effort to give them a safe home and to raise awareness of vegan sanctuary work in Ireland. It also offers the chance to help me ensure that the sanctuary residents have the facilities and care necessary to ensure their best possible standard of living, and to assist in the development of Eden as a home of excellence for rescued farmed animals.

I am very happy to share my knowledge and ideas with you and I am equally happy to learn from your previous experience and be informed by your ideas.

Eden was the first vegan sanctuary to open in Ireland in 2008. Our plans for Eden's future include expansion for rescue of larger residents such as dairy cows; further rewilding and enrichment of the residents' living quarters (e.g. planting fruit and nut trees); construction of a large log building to house the education centre and residential vegan retreat centre/guesthouse, the development of a veganic garden for food production, along with the development of a sustainable, plant based agricultural enterprise.

Eden requires interns who are vegan, or want to learn to be vegan and to work for the rights and liberty of other animals. We value interns who share our vision of animal liberation and compassionate living and who are able to work hard, reliably, and responsibly on the tasks that make life worth living for the residents and work at Eden.

A fee of £50 per week is required to cover the cost of keeping interns at Eden. This includes accommodation, food, electricity, heat, and training costs. If you are unable to pay this fee and would like to do an internship, please write explaining your circumstances.

Volunteers (in contrast) are required to be skilled and to have relevant experience and are not charged for on-site accommodation.

You must have excellent English to work at Eden. Although I would love to accept people who are currently learning English, given the need for clear communication for the safety of the residents, this is not possible. Please re-apply when your English is fluent.

**Trial Period:** Interns are accepted on a trial period of one to weeks to make sure that Eden is a suitable match for you and that you suit the needs of Eden.

Interns are offered placements of not less than four weeks. If you specifically require a placement that is less than four weeks please contact me to discuss your circumstances.

A refundable deposit of €100 is requested to cover any damage to the property or costs incurred to the sanctuary by you during your residence.

**NB It is essential that you carefully read the document entitled Terms and Conditions of working at Eden and sign your agreement to them prior to your placement.**

## **The Working Day**

The residents live by the light and this dictates much of our working day. We aim to be on the sanctuary at day break to begin our work for them. Morning tasks include opening the houses, medical rounds, feeding the residents, cleaning their food and water containers, breaking ice on their water on cold mornings, giving fresh water on a daily basis, and cleaning their houses. We feed some of the residents at several intervals throughout the day. Some of them have special needs such as blindness or temporary lameness and require more intensive caregiving. Residents are often ill during the cold winter months and they are usually taken from the sanctuary and cared for indoors or in our sanctuary hospital. Residents who are ill require more intensive, individual care. Morning duties for them include giving clean water and food; cleaning out their living quarters, administration of medication, and lighting the fire during the cold months to keep them warm. Medical checks and treatment continue throughout the day, both indoors and outside on the main sanctuary, depending on the needs of the residents, and we frequently do a medical round at night. Cleaning their living quarters may be required several times a day when they are ill.

In summer time, our day ends when they have gone to bed. In winter, the residents retire at about 4.30 pm and we use the remainder of the short days to work on maintenance, administrative, educational and research work.

Interns will have the opportunity to learn about recognition of and treatment of the various illnesses that are all too common in the bodies of those bred to produce food. There will also be the opportunity to learn about

illness prevention, parasite control, the treatment of injuries, and the social, emotional and cognitive lives of farmed animals.

Interns are invited to be active participants in making Eden the best home it can be for its residents. Your ideas for how we can improve are welcome and will be carefully considered.

An Internship at Eden also offers the opportunity, from time to time, to learn the tasks of sanctuary maintenance work: sterilizing houses, cutting grass, making hay, repair of resident's housing, painting, fence construction and repair, cemetery maintenance, and sanctuary security. I am not personally skilled at many of these construction tasks but if there are employees or skilled volunteers at Eden during your internship, this will provide you with a valuable opportunity to learn something about this aspect of sanctuary work.

Sanctuary tasks also include emergency preparation of living quarters for newly rescued residents, stock taking of food, bedding, hardware and medicines, veterinary visits, fund raising, research, website development and maintenance, animal rights and vegan education, animal rescue, sponsorship of Eden, and media relations.

Eden is in the process of developing a veganic garden for food production at Eden. This affords interns the opportunity to learn something about the most sustainable way forward for food production on the planet. Gardening duties include weeding, composting, planting, polytunnel work, protection of trees etc.

It is desirable, but not essential, that you have a full driver's licence.

It is essential to be able to lift heavy loads such as buckets of food and water, bales of wood shavings, hay and straw, and to deal with heavy residents such as adult sheep.

It is essential that you are interested in the life and wellbeing of other animals at an individual level and that you have the capacity for compassionate care of very vulnerable beings.

## **Your Health & Wellbeing**

An internship at Eden can be physically and emotionally demanding. Please inform me in your application if you have physical or psychological health challenges. You will be assured of compassionate understanding and your challenges will not preclude your being accepted for an internship position but it is something that I need to be aware of prior to your arrival.

Health & Safety regulations specify that you must have an up to date Tetanus shot whilst working with other animals. It is your personal responsibility to care for your health and to ensure that you are covered by insurance and appropriate medical precautions prior to coming to Eden.

If you sustain an injury during the course of your work please inform me immediately.

Sanctuary work is a seven day week, 365 days a year and the hours are long. Interns are entitled to take two days per week off work, but we ask that in times of emergency you forego your time off to care for the residents' needs.

Given the heavy work load it is essential that you have good self-care skills and that you use your time off to replenish yourself.

## **Work at Eden**

The following is the list of work duties at Eden for interns.

Interns are not required to have previous experience or skills as training will be provided. However, it is essential that you are dedicated and passionate and that you have the ability to follow instruction and to learn to work independently of supervision.

### **Duties & Responsibilities:**

- Ability to follow instructions
- Ability to work on own initiative and complete tasks in a timely manner
- Reliable, dependable, punctual, responsible
- Respectful of other animals and of the ethos of a vegan sanctuary and the intention to improve the lives of other animals
- If you have a problem at Eden I ask that you first speak directly to the me as Sanctuary Director to see how it can best be resolved

### **Animal Care**

- Ensure that the sanctuary is safe and secure for its residents
- Close external and internal gates when entering and leaving the sanctuary
- Ensure that residents' houses are securely locked at night
- Ensuring that the residents have fresh food and water on a daily or twice daily basis
- Cleaning residents housing daily
- Household tasks such as cleaning, tidying, sweeping and washing floors in the areas of the house where special needs or sick residents live
- Immediate reporting any evidence of illness to the Sanctuary Director
- Assisting with routine checks and health prevention duties (e.g. parasite control)
- Stocktaking sanctuary supplies of food, bedding etc
- Carrying heavy items such as bags of food, wood shavings, timber, water
- Transport of residents for veterinary treatment or rescue

- It is desirable that you are able to hold heavy animals such as sheep
- Medical care as prescribed by the resident's vet: administration of medicines, individual, intensive medical care, wound care, etc
- Care of special needs residents

Some interns are particularly interested in Construction and Maintenance work. If this is the line of work that you would like experience in, please discuss this with me in your application form and at interview so that I can ensure that there is a skilled and qualified staff member at Eden to engage in this type of training and supervision with you.

### **Construction Work/Maintenance**

- Repair and maintenance of resident's housing
- Construction of fences, new houses, ponds etc
- Grass cutting and strimming
- Making hay
- Able to lift heavy loads
- Chopping and carrying timber
- If you have experience of log building we would be very interested as we intend constructing a log building in the future

### **Veganic Gardening/Permaculture**

- Weeding
- Planting
- Watering
- Polytunnel tasks
- Tidying
- Planting, thinning, combination planting
- Fertilising soil
- Composting
- Able to lift heavy loads

### **Volunteering/Internship Essentials:**

**It is essential that you make yourself familiar with the websites associated with Eden and Matilda's Promise:**

[www.edenfarmanimalsanctuary.com](http://www.edenfarmanimalsanctuary.com)

[www.matildaspromise.org](http://www.matildaspromise.org)

Learn as much about us as you can before you arrive. This ensures that we are a good match as host and volunteer/intern.

If you are not vegan we recommend that you read/watch some of the following prior to coming to Eden:

Abolitionism <http://www.abolitionistapproach.com/>

The Humane Myth <http://www.humanemyth.org/>

The Food Empowerment Project <http://www.foodispower.org/>

A Well Fed World <http://awellfedworld.org/>

Earthlings <http://earthlings.com/>

Gary Yourofsky <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=es6U00LMmC4>

You Haven't Lived Until You've Hugged a Turkey <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZBNII5Y4SY>

Will Tuttle, The World Peace Diet <http://worldpeacediet.org/download.htm>

**Trial Period:** I take volunteers/interns on a trial period of two weeks to make sure that Eden is a suitable match for you and that you suit the needs of Eden.

I look forward to hearing from you and to welcoming successful applicants to Eden.

*Sandra Higgins*

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Sandra Higgins, BSc Psych, MSc Couns Psych, MBPsS  
Director & Founder

I have read the above description of the internship position at Eden and am agreeable to come to Eden and work and live within these parameters for the duration of my internship.

Signed: