

**T.O.P.A.Z**  
**Trefoil Overseas Partnership. Adventure with Zest!**  
**Action Team information**

The third TOPAZ project will take place in Russia in the Autumn of 2018, (September to November) depending on the best time for RADS (The Russian Association of Girl Scouts). It will last for 3 weeks, of which the first two will be working on the project with members of RADS and the final week will be for rest and recreation, giving you the chance to see some of the well known sights. It has been structured in this way to give participants who are working the choice of taking an extra week to join the sightseeing, or to leave and return to work. The probable cost will be £2200 - £2400.

After the success of the 2016 project, RADS feels that it would be very beneficial to move to a different Region of Russia to continue the expansion in their membership. The 2016 team was most successful in targeting small towns, where there were fewer alternative activities for young people, and RADS feel that this is probably where the 2018 team should work. Another possibility is that RADS will organise a "taster" event in schools or Universities over a few days, with their own members and girls and women who have never been in Girl Scouts. The team would help plan and carry out one or more events and help evaluate it to improve presentation etc.

Members of overseas Associations, especially the newer ones, often expect members from the UK to know about WAGGGS in considerable detail, so be prepared to do some research if you have only a sketchy knowledge of Committees, Conferences and initiatives.

Working with a foreign Association is very enjoyable, but it can also be very hard work. You are up early and you often don't get to bed until after midnight, because they are so interested in seeking information, both about Guiding/Girl Scouting and living in other countries. The culture shock of being in a country where you not only don't speak the language, but also cannot read the signs, can be stressful and exhausting, so participants need to have good stamina.

If you have a medical condition which is worsened by fatigue or stress think carefully before applying.

Russians don't really understand vegetarianism, so, if this is your lifestyle, be prepared to take supplements with you, as your diet is likely to consist of pickled or boiled vegetables, the latter sometimes strained from a soup with a meat base. However, there is likely to be the opportunity to visit restaurants which will give a wider choice of diet.

Some medical conditions will require special insurance and, of course, the EHIC card is not accepted in Russia. However, Russian hospitals do have emergency departments, and many cities have western clinics, so, if you can manage your condition, this shouldn't be a barrier to your taking part.

If you are selected, please check if you take medication which is on the list of substances banned in Russia, as, if you do, these have to be given special permission which has to come from the Notary Public at the Russian Embassy.

**You should have been a member of the Trefoil Guild for at least a year before applying to join the TOPAZ project, and you must be available for the Briefing/selection Day on 2nd September 2017, and the first planning meeting on the weekend of 12<sup>th</sup>- 14<sup>th</sup> January 2018.**

All the team members should have

- Enthusiasm - for the project, and for working in the team and alone
- Experience of working to a deadline
- Time - at least one weekend, and continuing work at home
- Computer literacy
- Patience
- Sense of humour
- Willingness to learn about RADS programme, and Training scheme, with an open mind.

Within the team, we are looking for the following skills.

- Experience of writing support material
- PR skills
- Experience of, or interest in, Russia
- Thorough knowledge of WAGGGS
- Training skills
- Creativity
- Knowledge of other Girl Guide/Girl Scout Associations