

UPF Russia Volunteers Engage Community in Eco-Projects

Elena Knyazeva
June 12, 2025



Voronezh, Russia - Hundreds of people, young and old, joined in a series of environmental activities spanning two weeks in Voronezh, Russia, under the auspices of the EcoGeneration project. This project, led by Ms. Elena Knyazeva, head of UPF-Voronezh and coordinator of environmental programs for UPF-Russia, promotes ecological volunteering as a vital part of civic engagement.



On May 28, a workshop for eco-education volunteers was held in Voronezh as part of the Eco-Volunteer School project. The workshop took place at a local children's sports and educational center, to prepare the team for the upcoming summer season of events. Participants discussed the project's development strategy, assigned areas of responsibility, and selected coordinators for the main activities. The Fifteen

volunteers took part, all committed to sharing environmental knowledge with residents of the city and region.



On May 29, the Spring Week of Kindness 2025 kicked off at Orlyonok City Park. The Eco-Volunteer team introduced the field of eco-volunteering and held an engaging eco-themed game session for park guests. More than 200 visitors explored various aspects of volunteerism presented by organizations from the Voronezh region. Seventeen eco-volunteers shared their experiences and invited others to join the project. The event clearly demonstrated that environmental volunteering can be exciting, dynamic, and truly meaningful.



On May 31, EcoGeneration's School of Eco-Volunteers took part in an environmental forum, "Together, One-on-One," at the Voronezh State University of Engineering Technologies. Ms. Elena Knyazeva gave a presentation on the use of interactive game-based formats in environmental education. As part of the forum's practical session, the team conducted an eco-game session, where participants learned about the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the basics of waste separation and recycling. The forum brought together students, educators, specialists, and volunteers. The interactive format proved especially effective in delivering environmental knowledge.

On June 6, in honor of the UN World Environment Day, a vibrant eco-themed game event was held in Orlyonok City Park. Interactive challenges led by fairy-tale guardians helped participants discover the natural beauty and ecological richness of the Voronezh region. Through these characters, attendees learned about responsible waste management and the importance of protecting water, air, animals, and the home environment.

The event featured engaging educational stations designed to deepen environmental awareness in a playful and interactive way. The eco games, managed by 15 dedicated volunteers, attracted around 150 park visitors, both children and adults. Participants enthusiastically took part in the challenges, gaining valuable environmental knowledge in a fun and accessible format, in the spirit of World Environment

Day's global mission to promote environmental stewardship.



On June 7, marking Russia's observance of the International Day of Water Bodies Cleanup, a team of EcoGeneration volunteers joined the traditional Clean-Up on the Usmanka initiative, organized by the H2Go diving club. Volunteers cleaned the banks of the Usmanka River, while divers focused on clearing debris from the riverbed. The 30 participants collected 12 large bags of trash. The event served as an example of cooperation between different volunteer groups - on land and underwater - toward a shared environmental goal.



This cleanup also highlighted the importance of preserving freshwater ecosystems, which play a vital role in biodiversity, public health, and the sustainability of local communities. Protecting rivers and waterways from pollution is a key step in building a healthier and more harmonious environment for all.

Finally, on June 12, in celebration of Russia Day, the EcoGeneration project team organized a creative eco-zone in Delfin City Park. Park visitors took part in a local history quiz, assembled a puzzle map of the Voronezh region, created unique Voronezh Matryoshka stacking dolls, and made thematic bracelets. This vibrant, educational, and heartfelt event, carried out by 10 volunteers, brought together over 200 visitors, highlighting that love for one's homeland begins with respect for its nature, history, and culture.