

Scholarship and Barter For Elfin Permaculture Workshops and Courses

Information Sheet for Participants

[Note: This Information sheet was drafted mainly for our usual programs. We believe that it applies to our email programs as well, but if you have questions, please let us know. Anything that you can do to help us make this document clearer is appreciated.]

Eligible Programs

Scholarships are available in all Elfin Permaculture workshops and courses, but not for lectures. Barter may be proposed in advance for any Elfin Permaculture event. We will not consider barter offers at the door.
Requirements--Barter

Elfin Permaculture will consider barter for our share of the workshop or course fee. The barter offer must be made before we leave home to teach the event. Obviously, the barter must be goods or services that we need and that can be delivered in advance of the program in question. Based in experience, we no longer accept barter for goods and/or services to be delivered after the workshop or course.

Barter offers must be typewritten on a single side of a single sheet of paper or less than 250 words by email. Generally, a barter offer is considered for its cash value to us. In workshops where we are paid a flat fee by the host, we cannot consider barter, of course. Contact the host. Otherwise, our share of workshop fees is all that we can barter. Generally, in programs of 10 days or longer, we receive 1/2 of the fee that participants pay, although this does vary infrequently. We will reply as soon as practical. We must receive the bartered goods and/or services in full before we leave to teach the program. Be sure to ask when we will leave. If paid enrolment is low, we may not be able to consider barter.

Requirements--Scholarships

All Elfin Permaculture programs offer scholarships. Priority is given to indigenous people of the region, women, and disadvantaged minorities, in about that order. The principal requirement for a scholarship is that the recipient is unable to pay through no choice of his/her own. People in voluntary poverty, e.g. most college students, people choosing a limited lifestyle, etc., are not considered unable to pay, though they may lack funds, unless other circumstances also apply. Exceptions may be made for people on an established path of service on a case by case basis. We define inability to pay to mean that you would deprive yourself and/or dependents of biological necessities if you were to pay the full fee.

Scholarship applications must be typewritten on a single side of an 8-1/2X11 (or metric equivalent) sheet of paper or no more than 500 words submitted by email. Applications in any other format will be returned or discarded. State that you are unable to pay the full fee and also how much you can pay. You need not state why you cannot pay unless your circumstances suggest that you are unable to pay through choice. (E.g. a

college student may wish to point out that she is from a poor village in India so could not pay even if she had not accepted a college scholarship.) Also on the sheet describe briefly your background without giving undue weight to "credentials." They are of interest, but not more so than other details. State why you wish this training. Finally, state what you will do with it.

Based on your application, the composition of the workshop, and available slots, we will approve or disapprove your scholarship. We will not offer a scholarship for less than you said that you can pay. If you require a full scholarship and we can offer only a half scholarship, we will give the half scholarship to someone else or leave it unfilled. Please do not try to use this process to bargain with us.

All Elfin Permaculture Scholarships are based on the Maori Koha concept. The koha, is, roughly speaking, a gift given in consideration for a gift received. It is not an exchange. It is an acknowledgement of the law of gifts: 'Love is the harmony between giving and receiving.'

The koha is a way to support people who provide services to others in ways that limit their attention to their own needs. It enables people to get services that they need--healing or teaching, for example--independently of their material resources. Elfin Permaculture has found that in Western societies, the koha is culturally alien and it is not possible for us to conduct our work solely on this basis. So we offer as many scholarships as we can afford on a koha basis.

The scholarship is given without strings. If, after our workshop or course, you wish to contribute something as a gift, it is welcome. A gift can be money, goods or services. The giver of a koha bases it on the importance of the gifts they have received from the event and what the person has to give. There is no such thing as a large or small koha. We do not keep track of who gives kohas. Our only responsibility is to give the best service that we can. Consideration of the koha is the responsibility of the person receiving the services--we do not trouble ourselves about it.

Kohas such as food or help that support the workshop itself are generally kohas to the organizer only, not to Elfin permaculture as we rarely are involved in these details anyway. Because Elfin Permaculture gives most workshops and courses on the road, we are limited in the objects and services that we can accept. If what you have to offer is clearly not suited to our circumstances, please direct that gift in a way that will further permaculture and the welfare of Mother Earth. There is no time limit on the giving of a koha.

We like koha better than setting fees. We hope that this explanation makes a small contribution to spreading the practice of koha in Western society.