Frequently Asked Questions – FAQ

Norwegian Guide Service (NGS)

Updated 14.11.2026

General

Do I need to be Norwegian or from Bergen to become a guide?

Some of our guides are Norwegian while others are from different parts of the world. You do not need to be Norwegian or from Bergen to become a guide with Norwegian Guide Service (NGS) but you do need to be genuinely passionate about Bergen and Norway. Working as a guide means working in an international environment and we see the cultural diversity of our guides as an asset.

Do I need to know Norwegian to become a guide?

You don't need to know Norwegian to become a guide, as the core literature and information is in English. Nevertheless, knowing Norwegian is very useful to go more in depth about the content that you present. That is why we warmly encourage you to learn Norwegian and use it if you don't already.

What is the guiding season in Bergen?

The guiding season is defined by the tourist activity in Bergen. Even though there are travellers and there is a demand for guided tours year-round in Bergen, the high season starts from the end of April to mid-October, with August usually being the busiest month of the season. Cruises are a significant part of tourist activity in Bergen. Our guided tours are also on sale to the public all year round via our online platforms and the Tourist Information Centre in Bergen.

How can I apply?

Firstly, take your time to carefully read the job description on our website to familiarize yourself with our offer and the job requirements. After you have decided that becoming a guide with NGS is something for you, you need to apply via our online form on our website (or here:Norwegian Guide Service 2027 – Fill out form**).** Then, we take it from there together.

What are the most required languages for guiding?

English and German are the two main languages that most cruise passengers/tourists coming to Bergen speak. Spanish, Italian, French, Polish, Greek, Chinese and Dutch are also in high demand. Norwegian is often in demand for our tours for locals. A guide's language skills are a large factor in the number of possible assignments they will be offered during the season.

How well do I have to speak the languages?

Your language skills should fall between B2 and C2 according to EU standards (see "Europass language self-assessment grid"). All applicants will undergo language proficiency tests adapted for guiding. Knowing Norwegian is not mandatory, but it can be an advantage.

What do I get in return for working with NGS?

We are passionate about guiding and we view it as a profoundly human experience. Working with guides gives us a chance to help them become better and do the best work they can. The skills you acquire as a guide will help you for the rest of your life: how to improve public speaking abilities to maintain the guests` attention; how to lead a group of people, how to manage emergencies and difficult situations; how to react professionally to complaints and emotional outbreaks, and many other skills in addition to that. We deliver over 90% of the cruise calls, which means our guides have a significant percentage of the guiding assignments in Bergen. On top of cruise, we have online and physical sales of our guided tours all year round. You will also benefit from an international environment of professionals to work with and a chance to develop and certify skills to build a career.

Can I develop a career with NGS?

Once you become an NGS guide you can work as a guide for many years going forward. Some of our best guides have been guiding for more than 20 years. NGS is also a part of a larger network of companies all over Norway and Northern Europe. Working as a guide with NGS might just be the steppingstone towards a future career in the tourism and service industry. Our network is continuously growing, and should you apply for other positions, starting as a guide is a great way to get noticed.

What are the steps towards becoming a guide?

You can find detailed instructions on how to apply on our recruitment webpage.

Guide Certification and Training

Do I need to hold a certification to become a guide?

Yes, everyone who wants to become a Guide with NGS must hold a certification from a Norwegian-based guide course to meet the high standards required by our guests. We also want our guides to feel equipped and confident in performing their assignments.
In exceptional cases, we may work with guides who are not certified, provided they have demonstrated that they meet our standards. In such cases, a lower hourly rate will apply. All guides must hold a first-aid certification (CPR/AED). If you do not have one, NGS will provide the required training and certification.

There are several Guide certification courses available on the market and all guides must prove to have undergone a recognised Guide Certification in Norway, proving extensive local knowledge, have comprehensive knowledge of the specific routines and procedures for cruise assignments. All guides must hold a first-aid certification (CPR/AED). If you do not have one, NGS will provide the required training and certification.

We recommend the Certification Programme organised by Guide Academy (https://guideacademy.no/). The training program consists of an engaging online course that you can

complete from anywhere in the world, complemented by an intensive onsite training session scheduled for April. No prior guiding experience is required to apply—just bring your passion and enthusiasm!

Do I have to pay for the certification?

Most guide certification courses charge a fee, up to 28.000 NOK (*Oslo Guidekurs*). You can find the costs of these guide courses online.

The Certification Programme organised by Guide Academy provides great value and a comprehensive education for a successful guiding season. We fully sponsor the certification fee of the Certification with Guide Academy for those who commit to working a full season exclusively with us.

Is there further guide education during the season?

Additional optional educational activities will be open to anyone working with NGS. These activities will take place during the season and will consist of visits and seminars. Additionally, you can join your fellow guides on tours as observers. For certain tours, such as the full-day Hardanger and Flåm tours, you must first observe before being assigned to lead them on your own.
Your guide badge also gives you free access to most museums in Bergen, which you can visit on your own to expand your knowledge of the town and its surroundings.

Is there a training from NGS?

Within your first days at work, you are required to participate in a mandatory compensated training session where the practicalities, logistics, and booking system will be explained in detail.

Tours

What kind of tours will I do?

Throughout the season, guides will experience and lead a variety of tours, such as two-hour panoramic city tours by coach, excursions along Bergen's coastline by coach and ferry, hiking tours on Mount Fløyen and scenic fjord tours by coach for up to 50 guests, often including lunch. Guides may also have the opportunity to work from other ports and experience different parts of Norway.

As our operations are highly dynamic, guides may sometimes have to accommodate last-minute changes to schedules, assignments and tour programs when operational needs require it. While we strive to offer a varied guiding experience, there may be times when guides are assigned repeatedly to the same or similar tours, depending on demand and operational requirements.
Still, with different guests, changing weather and the occasional surprising question, even a tour you've led twenty times can find new ways to keep you on your toes!

Will I guide in Bergen only?

You will primarily guide in Bergen, our base port. From time to time, you may also have the opportunity to guide in the Voss area for our sister agency, Voss og Fjordane Guideservice (www.vossguideservice.no), or from other ports in Norway. We will arrange and cover all transportation, and you will be compensated for both the assignment and your travel time.

How can I practice and improve my guiding skills?

As well as online and printed sources, some of the best sources of information are your NGS colleagues, driver colleagues, and your guests. Additionally, evaluations from the Guide Manager or a member of the office team provide a valuable opportunity to receive constructive feedback, which can help you improve your performance and gain confidence through recognition. This feedback is invaluable in refining your skills and ensuring the highest level of service for our guests.

Employment Conditions

Am I guaranteed paid assignments after the guide certification?

Once you have fulfilled the contractual requirement of becoming a certified guide by successfully passing the exam, your employment contract will become valid, and you will be able to work as a guide with NGS. We will then strive to offer you as many assignments and hours as possible, based on your availability, qualifications, and the needs of our clients.

Is this a full-time job? How much can I expect to work?

Guiding is not a full-time job, and hours vary based on demand, which depends on cruise calls, private tours, and visitor numbers. During peak months like July, and August, you may work full-time, while in slower months, there may be fewer hours. Many guides use this time to explore other opportunities in Norway. Once you have fulfilled the contractual requirement of becoming a certified guide by successfully passing the exam, your employment contract will become valid, and you will be able to work as a guide with NGS. We will then strive to offer you as many assignments and hours as possible, based on your availability, qualifications, and the needs of our clients.

To provide more stability for our guides, we offer a minimum average guaranteed of 100 hours per month based on their skills and availability. Most of our guides typically work more than this guaranteed minimum per month.

If you have other commitments and need more flexibility, you can opt for a flexible on-call contract.

How much can I expect to earn?

Many guides earn well beyond the minimum guaranteed salary and have guiding in Norway as a lucrative part of their yearly income. The income is heavily affected by your availability and your skills.

A first-year guide, with full availability and guiding regularly in English and German, can potentially earn upwards of 190.000 NOK (May-October).

A first-year guide, with full availability and guiding regularly in English, Italian and French, can potentially earn upwards of 160.000 NOK (May- September).

An experienced guide, with full availability and guiding regularly in English and German, can potentially earn up to 220.000 NOK (May-October). Experienced guides can usually expect to earn more – a different hourly rate applies and their increased experience and skills work well with longer and more specialised assignments.

We put a lot of effort into giving you a realistic expectation of your earning potential before signing the contract. Working with Norwegian Guide Service should be an enriching experience, also from a financial perspective.

When do guides get paid?

Guides will be paid on the 15th of each month for the hours worked the previous month. For example, hours worked in May will be paid on June 15th. All guides are entitled to self-certification (egenmelding) in case of illness, which can be used for up to three calendar days at a time. You can learn more on the NAV website:

After the contract ends, you will receive your Holiday Pay. (https://www.skatteetaten.no/en/person/taxes/get-the-taxes-right/employment-benefits-and-pensions/holiday-pay/)

What happens if I get sick?

All guides are entitled to self-certification (egenmelding) in case of illness, which can be used for up to three calendar days at a time. You can learn more on the NAV website: https://www.nav.no/en/home/benefits-and-services/Self-certification-egenmelding#chapter-1

Can I take holidays?

Due to the seasonal nature of the job taking time off during the season affects your overall income and your minimum guaranteed. If you plan to take extended holidays during the peak season, it's important to communicate this before signing the contract so we can plan accordingly. All holidays must be requested and approved by the office to ensure proper scheduling and coverage.

Do I have to pay tax?

Yes, you will have to pay tax. Unless you are registered as self-employed in Norway, NGS is legally required to automatically pay tax for you in accordance with your registered Norwegian tax card. You must make sure you apply for and have the correct tax card registered with the Norwegian tax office (Skatteetaten, https://www.skatteetaten.no/person/). Tax is paid by our accounting department from your gross amount before you are paid your net salary for each working month.

Do I get employee insurance?

You will be covered by an obligatory Norwegian occupational injury insurance for medical emergencies when at work. If you are a resident of Norway, then you have the standard health insurance provided by the social security system. EU/EEA citizens are covered for most health expenses by their European Health Insurance. Very often our guides from other countries obtain travel insurance for convenience.

Do I have to stay and work the entire season?

Some of our guides only work for part of the season, some work throughout the year. To plan the season, it is important for us to agree on the period during which you are available to take on assignments before signing the contract. The contract is a legally binding commitment towards the duration of the work relationship.

NGS will prioritise guides who can and show the desire to work for the entire season. A guide's availability is a large factor in the number of possible assignments they will be offered during the season.

Do I need a mobile phone and Norwegian phone number? Do I get refunded for the costs of using my phone?

You must have a contactable mobile phone to work as a guide; mobiles are required for receiving and confirming assignments, as well as for during the tours (e.g. emergencies, contacting the office). Guides are strongly encouraged to have a mobile telephone with a Norwegian sim card activated and working. Guides will be compensated, for using their Norwegian phone number only.

Norwegian SIM cards can be obtained using a national ID card, passport or a Norwegian D number. There are both pay-as-you-go (*kontant*) and subscription plans available in Norway. We expect guides to follow our dress code and wear the NGS-branded clothing provided at the time of contracting. In some ports, a high-visibility vest is required; an NGS-logo vest will be supplied.

Is there a uniform? Do I have to pay for it?

We expect guides to follow our dress code and wear the NGS-branded clothing provided at the time of contracting. In some ports, a high-visibility vest is required; an NGS-logo vest will be supplied.

Our guides must follow a dress code:
- A white shirt/polo shirt/collared shirt
- Black trousers (no jeans)
- Black shoes
- An NGS-branded green vest
- An NGS-branded visibility vest (depending on the location)

You will receive a green vest, a yellow visibility vest (mandatory on certain piers in Bergen), and one branded polo shirt to use throughout the season. Except for the polo shirt, these items must be returned at the end of your contract. No payment is required.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have black trousers, collared polo shirts or shirts in neutral colours, and black shoes to wear during assignments. Some clients may also require that we wear accessories with their own logos or symbols.

Are there any other clothing requirements?

Bergen is rainy - we recommend that you are prepared for the weather with rain boots, rain trousers, wool underwear, etc.

International applicants considering moving to Bergen

Is there anything I need to do to be able to work in Norway?

It is your responsibility to check whether you can work in Norway. Please consult the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) website at www.udi.no/en and the Service Centre for Foreign Workers (SUA) at www.sua.no/en for more information.
Also find more information at http://www.robinhoodhuset.no/about-us/activities/advice-and-guidance/.

Do I need a work permit?

Citizens of an EU/EEA country are allowed to visit and work for 3 months. After 3 months you must register with the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI). It is your responsibility to check whether you need a work permit. We cannot provide support for work permit applications. Consult the UDI website at www.udi.no/en and the Service Centre for Foreign Workers (SUA) at www.sua.no/en

How can I apply for a tax card?

You can book an appointment online at the Service Centre for Foreign Workers (SUA) in Bergen, where you will have to go in person to obtain your tax card. You will need to fill in the relevant forms and provide documentation to prove your requirement to pay tax. Refer to:
https://www.skatteetaten.no/en/person/foreign/are-you-intending-to-work-in-norway/tax-deduction-cards

Do I need a visa to come to Norway?

Citizens of Nordic and EU/EEA countries do not need a visa to come to Norway. It is, however, your responsibility to check if you do need a visa to come to Norway. We cannot provide support for visa applications. You can do that here: https://www.udi.no/en/want-to-apply/

Does Norwegian Guide Service organise accommodation?

While we do not provide accommodation ourselves, we can offer guides the opportunity to rent rooms in shared apartments with fellow guides through our accommodation arrangement. Availability is

limited and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Guides are responsible for covering their own accommodation costs. We are also happy to provide guidance to guides who prefer to arrange their own housing independently.

How do I find a place to stay in Bergen?

Most people looking for a place to rent use websites such as www.hybel.no or www.finn.no
Look at local transport connections on www.skyss.no/en/

How much does it cost to rent in Bergen?

Rooms in shared flats in the city centre typically range NOK 7,000–9,000/month (+electricity if not included). Deposits of 2–3 months' rent are common.

What should my monthly budget be?

Suggested starter budget: NOK 11,500–13,500/month, including accommodation (NOK 7,000–8,000), food (NOK 2,000–2,500), and transport/phone/internet/electricity (NOK 1,500–2,000+).

Transport options:
Bus/tram travel pass (monthly) - 504 per month (302 student), 51 for a 1-hour ticket (30 student) https://www.skyss.no/billett-og-pris/prisar/buss-bybanen-og-nokre-batruter/#vaksen fr%C3%A5 18 %C3%A5r
City e-scooters: Ryde, Voi ca. 300 /14 days

What other financial practicalities are there to consider?

Please be aware that many landlords require two or three months of rent as a refundable deposit.
Your salary will be paid out monthly on the 15th of the following month.
Students with valid student ID can often get discounts on travel passes and other services.

My application

I have worked with a different guide agency in the past. Can I still apply?

We welcome guides that have worked with other companies.

The deadline has passed. Can I still apply?

If the deadline for applications has passed you can submit your interest to work as a guide with us. We will get back to you with information on what you should do next.

I am not available throughout the whole season. Can I still apply?

You can still apply but guides who are available for the whole season have an advantage in the recruitment process.

NORWEGIAN GUIDE SERVICE

I want to move to Bergen, but I do not have enough funds to support myself until my first salary. Can I still apply?

It is your responsibility to provide for yourself until your first salary payment.

I do not have any previous work experience. Can I still apply?

Not having work experience does not stop you from becoming a fantastic guide. You must however prove in the application process that you have experience or willingness of being committed to work, such as an employee or volunteer in a charitable or non-governmental organization.

I do not live in Bergen yet. Can I still apply?

Yes. But you do eventually have to be in Bergen and ready to start working as a guide by the beginning of the contract or earlier if you will decide to take the certification course with Guide Academy.

I do not live in the city centre. Can I still apply?

Yes, but longer commutes increase the risk of delays. Punctuality is essential.

I do not have a passport/ID card and I live outside of Norway. Can I still apply?

You must make sure to obtain a passport/ID card by the time you travel to Norway. Our guides who have come to Norway and did not have a passport/ID, have had difficulties with the paperwork (opening a bank account, getting a tax card etc.)

I am not an EU/EEA citizen. Can I still apply?

Unfortunately not, unless you already reside in Europe and have the appropriate documentation to live and work in Norway. It is your responsibility to check that you are entitled to live and work in Norway. Check via https://www.udi.no/en/

I do not currently live in Bergen. If I get invited for an interview how will that work?

All interviews will be held online via Microsoft Teams. You do not need a Microsoft Teams account to join the interview — just follow the link in the invite you will receive in your mailbox. We will then communicate the next steps.

I do not have a visa for Norway. Can I still apply?

You must be entitled to work and live in Norway by the time you apply. This includes the visa if required. It is your responsibility to check that you are entitled to live and work in Norway. Check via https://www.udi.no/en/

I don't have a work permit for Norway. Can I still apply?

You must be entitled to work and live in Norway by the time you apply. This includes the application for a work permit if required. It is your responsibility to check that you are entitled to live and work in Norway. Check via https://www.udi.no/en/