



Citrus

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The project: Solidarités Jeunesses is an organisation that works for non-formal education. It runs a number of small community centres in rural environments and organises short and long-term international workcamps, social integration projects, training programmes and actions for international solidarity. Created in 2003, the association CITRUS, represents the project of Solidarités Jeunesses in Midi-Pyrénées. The main activities of the association CITRUS are the organisation of workcamps with international volunteers, the organisation of workshops raising awareness of the environment, and the promotion of volunteering.

Location of the project: the project is in Laguérie, a small village with 730 inhabitants, in the region "Pays Midi-Quercy", situated in a rural and isolated area, about hundred kilometres north-eastern of Toulouse. This territory of Occitan traditions is covered by an associative net, which organises social and cultural activities, in an environment marked by weak economic activities and the ageing of the population. Laguérie is at 35 minutes by car from Septfonds (head office of the association Citrus), and it is about thirty kilometres from the towns of Albi (50 000 inhabitants), Gaillac (12 000 inhabitants), and Villefranche-de-Rouergue (12 000 inhabitants), and also about 70 km from the city of Montauban (55 000 inhabitants).



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Role and tasks of the volunteers: Volunteers will work 30 to 35 hours per week and take their holidays in consultation with the team, according to the season and needs of the association. Two half days per week are given to the conception and realisation of a personal project and language support. By participating in workshops and meetings organised by the association, volunteers are actively involved in the associative life, contribute to the general organization of the implemented activities, and can propose their own ideas.

Activities:

- Manual work: Volunteers will participate to the renewing and reconstructing of an old farm and its buildings, which is called “La Mayounelle”, in order to create a centre of reception and intercultural meeting, as well as the restoration of the small buildings in the surrounding municipalities. The work is undertaken in a team, and managed under the responsibility of a qualified leader.

- Local animation: The volunteers will participate regularly in activities of local animation, in cultural events or in activities with educational character in partnership with the municipalities, institutions and the local associations. The association supports for example the local schools to set up workshops regarding the environment, within the framework of the project of the collective garden.



- Workcamps: Long term volunteers may become campleaders during the summer in other villages of the region, under the support of the permanent staff. Every year, a collective training of one week is organised by Solidarités Jeunesses to enable them to acquire the necessary skills to function as workcamp leader. They can also invest themselves in the preparation of workcamps (prenegotiation meetings, logistic support, establishment of tools, selection of the location etc.)

Accommodation: The volunteers will be accommodated in collective housing, share rooms (2 to 3 volunteers per room) in a big house in the centre of the village, which is provided by the municipality. All the hosted people participate in the tasks of daily life and are requested to respect the collectively established rules of life - schedules, sharing out daily tasks, etc - everything that concerns the intercultural exchange.

The volunteers will have regular and free access to Internet, a telephone line in order to receive calls at the hosting place, and by looking out for possibilities of transportation according to needs (bicycles, minibus, public transport possibilities by bus in the local area, and train station in Laguérie : one hour by train from Toulouse).

Languages and specific skills : We expect that the volunteer has a good understanding of the global project, and that he or she wants to be part of the group dynamic of and the collective life. We consider volunteering as an act of exchange between a volunteer, who offers his or her time, work, and energy for the benefit of a project of common interest and a host community that offers the volunteer a field of learning, testing and personal development. We ask that volunteers are motivated, open minded and ready to make concessions in order to work as a team and live with other people very different.

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