



WELCOME TO YOUR VOLUNTEERING with CITRUS, regional delegation of SOLIDARITES JEUNESSES in Languedoc-Roussillon Midi-Pyrénées

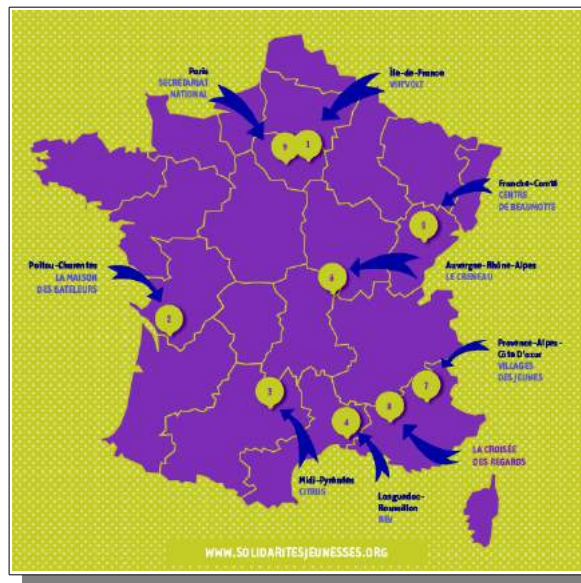


INFOSHEET

Who we are ?

Solidarités Jeunesses (SJ) is an association of a movement for **informal education** which values voluntary commitment, strong political will, and solidarity as its core principles. Our course of actions is influenced by our ideal vision of society, in which progress is social, respect for human beings and the environment is a fundamental and shared value, and the freedom to choose, to dream, and to resist is innate and encouraged by all.

Our activities are organised for all, regardless of gender, social and cultural background, or nationality. Since its creation, SJ participates in the construction and maintenance of peace by promoting intercultural and international social connections here in France and abroad. SJ works through participative pedagogy which supports initiative and personal commitment and combines the skills and intelligences of all our volunteers and employees.



Solidarités Jeunesses is composed of one National Secretary based in Paris, seven Regional Delegations, and one partner association. Our delegations host volunteers from France and from all around the world for short or long periods of time all year round. Furthermore, those delegations and partners host and provide assistance to young people with fewer opportunities, as part of our efforts for inclusion and solidarity. All of our delegations and partners are situated in unique environments, such as castles, former camp-sites, isolated villages in the heart of mountains, and former factories. These places have all been renovated thanks to the work of our short- and long-term volunteers, workers and permanent staff.

Did you know...? The first workcamps were organised after the First World War, in the Verdun region of France. Citizens of countries hostile to each other during the war were hoping to actively facilitate reconciliation between their respective peoples, believing that the absence of war didn't necessarily indicate the lasting presence of peace. These men and women decided to cross their borders and unite their forces in order to work together, in the interest of all peoples, towards the sustainable development of peace.

Solidarités Jeunesses is member of the following networks :

- Cotravaux: network of french Ngos for voluntary work
- CNAJEP: Comity for national and international relationships between youth and popular education NGOS
- CCIVS: Cpmity for coordination of international voluntary service
- Alliance: european network of voluntary service organisations
- NVDA: Network for Voluntary Development in Asia.

Citrus association and the town of Laguépie



Founded in Toulouse in 2002, Association **Citrus** moved to Laguépie in 2012, a small village in the Tarn-et-Garonne in the Gorges de l'Aveyron, 1 hour north-east of Toulouse. Volunteers live in a former home of the Companions of the Tour de France. This place can accommodate up to nine international volunteers and temporary groups. The main activities unfolds on the heights of the village, at the Mayounelle, around the restoration of an old farmhouse, which will host the international center of the association.

Laguépie is a small village in the countryside rather quiet. However we can find here a lot of associations, every shops necessary to daily life, two weekly local producers open markets, a few bars and restaurants, as well as a beach in summer! Summer is very warm here and it is always a real pleasure to walk down the river and enjoy a little swimming t the end of the day! Surrounding nature is lovely and perfect if you like to walk, hike, do canoe or outside activities. Laguépie enjoys a train station in the middle of the village, so it is also possible to take a train on week-ends to visit the region and around. Winter is quite calm and good for rest, summer can be very animated with a lot of fairs, festivals, concerts everywhere. And at Citrus you will not get bored either, in summer we sometimes welcome more than 60 people on our site!



Volunteering at Citrus and Solidarités Jeunesses

Volunteering is an exchange, a meeting, facilitated by someone who wants to offer his/her time, energy, and fresh perspective to a general interest project. Volunteerism is also a welcoming community that offers to the volunteer a valuable opportunity to learn, to experiment and to undergo personal development. Being a volunteer is not merely an activity, but a many faceted process brought about by our partner associations before, during and after the volunteer project is completed. At SJ, volunteering does not mean humanitarian aid, because we do not deal with emergency situations, but rather an intercultural exchange and apprenticeship. Voluntary service exists almost everywhere in the world and is a commitment which varies among different countries, cultures, and types of projects. Volunteering brings together diverse communities and separate entities, local associations, men, women, youths and local authorities. **Volunteering is above all a personal commitment, which invites you to a deep discovery.**

Why do we welcome volunteers ?

- to give an intercultural value to all of our projects
- to give every person evolving within the association the opportunity to grow from meeting other people (discovering a new culture, mindopenness, exchange of ideas, learning a new language, etc.)
- to foster local development and animation in link with the local inhabitants and associations thanks to the contribution of international volunteers

Getting to know better the concept of popular education...



Popular education is the education that is not bound to traditional frames like family, school or university. It's the education that can be experienced during leisure time, yes, but thanks to the voluntary practice of a group life,

confrontation with the other, sharing with the others. It is also peer-to-peer education, a way to learn that does not come from the upper part and that makes culture accessible to any layer of the society.

By culture let's hear culture in a global way, not « high culture like expensive pieces of art », rather in a large sense including science, technics, sports, knowledge of the arts, artistic expression, personal soft skills. It's the learning of active citizenship, not in a political way but as a real action : the art of talking in public, of being able to listen the others, to lead a group, to feel integrated in the society...

Our work



The activities of the association are multiple, intense and bring people to mingle, work and sometimes live together. **"Working together" is based on the philosophy that unites the long term volunteers, employees in insertion, permanent staff, voluntary on international projects, etc...**

Heritage restoration, gardening, cooking, European cultural events, promoting volunteering, entertainment from various local associations, developing a network of local producers, are the association's current projects, proud of its roots in rural areas.

Within the association, volunteers have an activity of 5 days per week, usually from Monday to Friday, but sometimes Saturdays and Sundays can be working days. During social group welcomings planning usually change. Here is an example of regular planning of volunteers.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Construction work at la Mayounelle or outside	Construction work at la Mayounelle or outside	Shopping for the house of volunteers	Personal project or construction work	Weekly meetig of the volunteers	Free time	Free time
Construction work at la Mayounelle or outside	Construction work at la Mayounelle or outside	Cleaning of the house or animation at the local Youth center	Personal project or construction work	Personal project or house work	Free time or animation at the local youth center	Free time
			Animation at local youth center	Animation at local youth center		

Missions of the volunteers are very varied. We could divide them into 5 main parts :

- take part every week to existing actions, such as construction work with the insertion workers two days a week, take part into various meetings, animating the Youth center for local teenagers
- take actively part into the volunteers daily life and management of the house : group life, animations, making menus and shopping for food, etc.
- support the association occasionnaly in its social welcoming : during those projects where young people with fewer opportunities are hosted at the house of volunteers and share work as well as collective life,

volunteers are the ambassadors of the association. They are in charge of logistic preparation of the welcoming, sharing the rules of life of the house, proposing leisure activities and taking care of meals with the groups.

- develop personal projects, alone, with the volunteers or with other members of the association
- lead international workcamps for young adults or teenagers in the region during summer.

Group life

As a volunteer you will share a house with other volunteers! It is of high importance to commit into daily life, as in a big house-share, because the house will look like its inhabitants, it's your home sweet home for a few months! Sometimes you will have to share this house with young people hosted in the frame of our social welcoming projects, so you can consider this house as your own shelter as well as a international hosting center where every people can come to enjoy a unique group experience. We invite you to bring along your favourite recipes, music and anything else that is an expression to the others of your culture and your interests.

As written above, daily intercultural exchange is a great way to achieve our objectives for peace building. Life of long term volunteers and of hosted people along the year is highly enriched by those meetings, which give everyone the opportunity to learn from the difference with the others, from confrontation of point of views and to discover common points overtaking any cultural borders! This gives birth to unique beautiful moments and stories between people.



As you can imagine, it can be hard sometimes to share one's daily life with a dozen of other people in the same space. So to facilitate things for everybody, the house has some collective rules: the one imposed by the legal frame of the association and French laws and the ones you will decide all together regarding your needs. For example when you will host minors, alcohol will be strictly forbidden in the house. Those rules are here to protect the people around you from dangerous behaviours. Also you will have to respect the sleep of the other residents. But don't worry, life in the house usually runs fine and is a lot of fun :)

Once a week you will participate in a weekly meeting with all the other volunteers and the tutor, to discuss about you feel, how the week was, and to organise the upcoming weeks. Once a month you will enjoy individual meetings with your tutor who is in charge to

watch for your well-being and for the good run of your volunteering.

In the house you will have access to a phone and to a computer with internet connexion to stay connected with your friends and family. If you bring along valuable objects, know that you will have access to a personal box closed by key, and if you bring precious objects for which you need special attention, a secured box is available at the office of Citrus. Besides, all volunteers are responsible for their stuff.

Citrus has hosted more than 60 long term volunteers in the past years, and each of them has left his-her mark there. In general Citrus can host around 10 people aht the house. By chosing volunteering you chose for a unique life experiece, where you can discover yourself, launch a personal project that makes sens to you, learn French, discover the likeable way of living in a rural french area, and have a positive impact on the people around you. In summer you can try to be a workcamp leader, during the year you can have access to trainings, seminars, gatherings from the association, in France or even other countries of Europe: a GREAT experience is waiting for you!

Free time

Voluntary service includes an intense mission and daily tasks, but it also includes free time that you will have to organise. Indeed as a volunteer you will get two days off per month plus your week-ends. That is why you will organise alone or with the group your leisure time regarding local possibilities, everyone's desires and your financial ressources. Opportunities can be visiting the regional touristic attractions, enjoying the natural area, organising a party or a meal with the inhabitants, etc. It is your responsibility to get involved in organising free time and taking part into creating a good group dynamic ! We also encourage creativity and improvisation, for example why would not you organise a hitch-hiking race to

visit a nearby city ? It creates a lot of good memories of adventure !

Living place



You will be hosted at the house of volunteers located in the heart of the village. It has 3 living rooms, a big kitchen, a big bathroom and a big garden where it's so nice to take sun in summer and plant plants ! Three dormitories exist in the house : one with 10 beds, one with 6 beds and one with 3 beds. As written above, you will share rooms and house with the other residents, and one of the volunteering objectives is to handle this collective in the respect of everyone.

Arrival in Laguépie : please tell us your day and time of arrival as soon as possible !

Address of the projet: Association Citrus, 18 Rue du Barry, Maison des Compagnons, 82250 LAGUEPIE
Tél: 05 63 65 94 06 / 07 82 72 37 03, e-mail: volontariat@citrus.asso.fr, Contact: Christelle Przybyl

We ask you to arrive at your hosting place in Laguépie. After you have informed the tutor of your arrival time, a person from Citrus will come to pick you up at Laguépie train station to bring you then to your living place and offer you a visit of Citrus. Please KEEP YOUR TRAVEL TICKETS with you !

PLANE

The airports with the best train connections are:

- Paris: <http://www.aeroportsdeparis.fr/adp/fr-fr/Passagers/Accueil/>
- Toulouse Blagnac: <http://www.toulouse.aeroport.fr/>

All airports have a shuttle service to the main train stations of the respective cities. From there you can continue your journey to the meeting point.

For people landing in Toulouse Blagnac Airport, you can get a shuttle to reach Toulouse city center or Toulouse Matabiau train station. The Flybus Airport Shuttle leaves every 20 minutes from Blagnac airport to Toulouse city center, from 5.30 am to 00.15 am. The travel lasts about 20 minutes. Get informed on the following website:

<http://www.toulouse.aeroport.fr/en/passengers/go/access-airport/airport-shuttle>

TRAIN

In France, all train connections are handled by this service : www.voyages-sncf.com. The website exists in many languages. BEWARE, train tickets can be very expensive, the sooner you buy them the cheaper prices you can get. Common connections from Paris to Laguépie are the next ones :

- PARIS AUSTERLITZ > TOULOUSE MATABIAU > LAGUEPIE
- PARIS MONTPARNASSE 1 et 2 > TOULOUSE MATABIAU > LAGUEPIE.

Every year, thousands of people go for international volunteering. Those exchanges have very positive impacts on the volunteers and on hosting communities. However one can not ignore the negative impacts of travels made.

Alliance, the european network for volunteering organisations tries to promote sustainable transport. Today plane transports are very widespread and easy but do not hesitate to search information for those other possibilities :

- Bus : www.eurolines.com
- Car-sharing : www.blablacar.com In France carsharing is very common and highly secure. Very cheap !

Don't forget to bring

- Good shoes, adapted to outside construction work
- Rain clothes and warm clothes, also summer clothes to protect from the sun
- Music instruments, recipies, music, pictures, souvenirs from your region, etc.
- A swimming suit if you like
- Your student card if you have one
- A copy of your valuable documents (identity card, passport, visa) that you sent to your mailbox (in case you lose the papers, this mail with documents can be very useful !)
- A language dictionary !

We wish you a very nice trip, and hope to meet you soon !

You want to know more ? You have questions ?

Feel free to contact us !

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See you soon !!

ACCESS PLAN TO CITRUS ASSOCIATION'S OFFICE

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