

INFOSHEET FOR LONG TERM VOLUNTEERS

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AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Villages des Jeunes, regional delegation of Solidarités Jeunes in the Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur region :

The Villages des Jeunes act for the social integration and the participation of all volunteers as a part of its action, in particular helping the socially disadvantaged, locally, nationally and internationally.

Its objective is to allow people from different social and cultural situations to work together at something useful.

To enable this, the association runs two international hosting centres, the Faï farm and the hamlet of Vaunières.

From these places, the association leads **various types of activities** (workcamps for disadvantaged people and volunteers, hosting events promoting social and international exchange...)...

... **which bring together people of different nationalities and cultures** (volunteers, families, holiday makers)...

... **through several activities** (decorating the buildings, environmental work, hospitality work, cultural activities, raising awareness about key issues such as environment)...

... **which operate within different areas** both social and professional (such as vocational training, restoring abandoned buildings, preserving the buildings and the environment and thus the heritage of these places, supporting local projects and stimulating local social activities).

<http://www.villagesdesjeunes.org/>

STAFF

The permanent staff is composed of:

- 1 regional delegate, based in Veynes (20 km from Faï)
- 1 director in charge of Faï overall project
- 1 technical coordinator in charge of planning the renovation work

Since our activities are more intense between April and October, we recruit more staff in this period: facilitator, technical leaders, cooks...

TARGET GROUP OF THE ASSOCIATION

People (adults and teenagers) victims of exclusions, marginalized or living in precarious situations and international volunteers.

FAÏ RECEPTION CENTRE

As many other farms located in mountainous and isolated areas, the Faï farm was abandoned at the beginning of the 20th century due to the changes of the local rural economy which caused the collapse of the agricultural and pastoral activities.

When the association settled in the Faï farm, most of the buildings were in ruins.



Thanks to a renovation project and international youth workcamps, the hamlet has become a national and international meeting centre. The almost entirety of the renovation work has been done with the participation of young people with social disabilities, international volunteers, families...

For 20 years the association has also developed in the Faï farm some music and Land'art festivals which use a geographical specificity of the farm: situated at the bottom of a valley in the Alps, the Faï farm is facing on one side a 400 metres high semi-circled cliff which has original sound effect and is used as a « natural organ ».

a) Geographical environment:

The Faï farm is situated 3, 5 km from the village of Le Saix, the closest village, and 17 km from the city of Veynes, in the north of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region.

Located at an altitude of 1000 metres in a valley, the place benefits from a well preserved environment composed of forests and mountain rivers. The mountains around offer many possibilities for beautiful hikes.

Quite close to the Faï farm (25 minutes by walking) and up in the mountains, the ruins the old Abbaye of Clausonne can be visited.

Le Saix, the closest village to Faï, has a population of about 80 inhabitants. It is set in a very rural area where people live mostly on agricultural and pastoral activities and are eager to develop tourism.

The closest cities are: Gap (40 km), Grenoble (100 km), Sisteron (60 km), Marseille (200 km).

b) Description of Faï reception centre

The centre comprises 4 main buildings which allow it to accommodate up to 60 people during the summer.

- **Farm house:** 8 beds in rooms of 2 to 4 people, independent kitchen and dining room, lavatory on the ground floor, showers and toilets are out of the building.
- **Aubergine house:** 20 beds with one dormitory of 8 beds and 3 rooms for 3 or 6 people, collective kitchen and dining room on the ground floor shared by international volunteers, the permanent staff and the guests, showers and toilets on the first floor.
- **The Cochonniers:** 13 beds in rooms of 4 or 5 people, showers and toilets are outside of the building.
- **The Bergerie:** 2 flats with 4 beds and one flat with 8 beds, independent living room, showers and toilets in each flat.

On the place, you will also find rooms for activities and parties, an open air theatre, a traditional oven to bake bread and pizzas, a wood and masonry workshop and gigantic trumps!

<https://lestrompesdufai.wordpress.com/>

c) Actions held in Fai

➤ Reception of groups and individuals

The reception activity is one of the most important ones, especially in the summer. Many groups, families and hikers stay at the centre, either to take part in renovation and construction activities or simply to take a holiday. Some other people also come for specific projects such as festivals and intercultural exchanges.

The centre is open from April to Octobre; however, the activities of the centre are concentrated to the high season (May to September).

➤ Projects with people experiencing difficulties

We organise specific projects (trainings, holidays...) at le Fai for young people who have dropped school, isolated mothers with their children, drug addicts, autistic people... These people stay with us for two weeks or more. They come to discover a new environment, meet new people and to take time for themselves.

➤ Inclusion – training programme (Chantier d’insertion / Chantier école)

Every year, this action targets ten to twelve local people confronted with social and professional difficulties. The people who take part in this action are salaried on a part time basis, they come to work 4 days a week. They contribute to the renovation work of the centre and help us with the reception of groups.

➤ International workcamps

At the farm, in the Abbaye of Clausonne or in the villages nearby, the association organises international youth workcamps in the period between April and October. Every year, these workcamps involve numerous volunteers coming from all over the world.

d) Work activities:

On the centre, the old farming activity has been replaced by many other activities:

- Environment and renovation work: painting, plumbing, electricity, construction work, landscaping, wood work, gardening...
- Cultural activities: concerts and music festivals organised in cooperation with local associations, intercultural meals, thematic days.
- Hosting work: cooking, preparing bedrooms, taking care of facilities, welcoming and helping groups and people

e) Collective life

Collective life is a key issue in the project. It is a support for meetings and exchanges between everyone. For this reason, everybody is supposed to act responsibly and to take part actively in everyday tasks (permanent staff, salaried people, volunteers, holiday makers, groups). Meals, household, washing up and all the efforts to keep the area clean and tidy are carried out in turns and by small groups. The meals are taken all together between all the residents of the centre.



f) Volunteer's accommodation:

The European volunteers are accommodated in the Farm House. In the house, there is a living room and kitchen reserved for the staff and the long term volunteers. The volunteers are accommodated in rooms of 2 to 4 people and have their own bathroom. Showers and toilets are situated in other buildings.

One of the toilets in Fai is a dry toilet. This dry toilet is part of the project of the association to manage the use of water. Indeed, the Fai farm is located in the South of France which is quite dry, especially during summer, and one aim of the association is to be environmentally friendly.

VOLUNTEER'S ROLE:

The volunteers are part of the permanent team who runs the project throughout the season. They are involved transversely in all the actions that are carried out by the association.

They help with the management of the centre: prepare and clean the bedrooms, plan the menus, organize activities and animations, orientate and inform the newcomers.

Volunteers also lead some activities and, through these activities, facilitate interactions and cultural exchanges between the very different people who come in Fai.

Volunteers have a key role in supporting our social actions as they share working times and everyday life with all the people we host. Volunteers organise activities during weekdays, evenings and weekends and help the permanent team to take care of the public with specific needs.

As members of the permanent staff, volunteers are given some responsibilities and support the project of the association in the centre through different activities:

- gardening
- cooking
- technical work
- preservation of the environmental
- organisation of cultural events

Volunteers are also expected to be camp leaders during the international youth workcamps taking place at le Fai or in villages around. They will receive a specific training for this.

Volunteers can get involved in other actions of the association such as promoting international voluntary service and international workcamps to young people and helping with the internal and external communication of the association.

a) Activities

- Sports activities and visits in collaboration with local organisations and tourism offices
- Cultural outings (cinema, concerts, festivals)
- Discovery of the natural environment: hikes, fauna and flora, geology, bath in the mountain rivers
- Events at the centre: barbecue, pizza parties, international and intercultural evenings

b) Services

- Internet: there is Internet and Wi fi access in Fai. The Wifi is reserved for the staff and the long term volunteers. An internet point is available outside of work time.
- Telephone: there is a phone point at the centre (you need a phone card). In case of emergency, volunteers can also use our land line.