

Information for Partner Organisations abroad

About IB VAP (Volunteer's Abroad Programs) and the program "IJFD"

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1. The Internationaler Bund (IB)

The IB is an independent agency in the fields of youth and social work, education and labour market services. The IB is mainly working on a local basis in 700 centers in over 300 places all over Germany. Founded in 1949 the IB is politically non-aligned and non-denominational.

Helping people to develop in freedom, to shape their own lives, to integrate into society, to take on personal responsibility, to actively help shaping the development of society, to encourage the willingness for social support to the individual and the society, to promote international understanding and cooperation are the objectives of IB.

The IB is convinced of the inalienable dignity of humans and stands up for democratic attitudes and behavior as well as for the acceptance of the other. The IB opposes racism, force and discrimination.

The IB services are based on technical, human development and organizational concepts. Permanent updating of knowledge, continuous development of quality standards and a comprehensive quality management are the basis of its professional capacity. The IB is a continuously learning organization and dealing with each other is supported by appreciation and mutual respect.


Though mainly working on a local and regional basis, the IB operates on the basis of European social and education policy. The IB's head office is located in Frankfurt/Main, Germany

More information: www.internationaler-bund.de

The IB in Kassel is mainly working in the area of youth work and youth counseling and voluntary services. The voluntary service area consists of a national program, where each year about 200 young people volunteer on a full time basis for one year in local organizations oriented towards the common good like hospitals, schools, kindergarten, facilities for elderly people and people with disabilities and the international voluntary service program IB VAP.

2. IB VAP – Volunteers' Abroad Programs

In 2004 the IB VAP were created to promote voluntary service activities on an international level. IB VAP Kassel takes part in different German youth voluntary service programs as a sending organization and is currently sending around 90 young people from Germany to different European countries and to South Africa, Cameroon, Tanzania and India. We are also developing an international hosting program that started in 2014 with three volunteers.

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A voluntary service means to us promoting a culture of dialogue, solidarity and learning from each other.

The benefits of international voluntary services are best described with a win-win-situation for all. Host organizations will benefit from the highly motivated and very committed young volunteers who will stay for one year but also often relate to the experience and hosting community throughout their whole life. The volunteers will find the opportunity to work and live within a different culture, develop their personality and skills and learn to take social responsibility. International voluntary services are considered as an essential contribution to global understanding and peacekeeping.

With our partners we want to work on an equal footing. Communication and mutual consultation are of great importance. Given the great distances, communication barriers, different organizational structures and realities, it is a challenge to create a common understanding for both sides. Learning and sharing ideas and experiences is also a process that links us with our partners in order to create long-standing and trusted partnerships.

The Team of IB VAP Kassel

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3. Information about the IJFD program

The realization of the IJFD is based on the Directive of the German Federal Government on the Implementation of the Internationaler Jugendfreiwilligendienst of 20th December 2010.

An IJFD is done as a full-time, mainly practical supporting activity in non-profit institutions. The IJFD is devoted to the idea of learning by serving, equally enhancing civil society structures, intercultural learning and personal and professional development. It also provides a mentorship program consisting of preparation, guidance and counselling during the period of service as well as follow-up evaluation and activities. The IJFD does not create an employment with the place of action.

The voluntary service assignment duration is between 6 and 24 months. Most volunteers take on an assignment for 12 months.

The voluntary service "IJFD" involves learning and helping. In this connection, learning shall involve intercultural and development-related learning and space for personal development and growth. Learning requires reflection and guidance. Helping shall involve practical work at the place of assignment and the ways in which the partner organization can benefit from the volunteers involvement. Helping provides opportunities for the volunteers to demonstrate commitment and solidarity. There should be a good balance of give and take between the partner organization and the volunteer.

Volunteers provide, for almost no remuneration, support services to the partner organization. The volunteers shall work full-time in areas conducive to the public good. The deployment of volunteers shall not interfere with the local job market.

The volunteers fulfil a wide range of tasks, according to their skills and the partner organizations' needs. They may work with children, youths, people with challenges, elderly and homeless. They may become involved into schools, kindergartens, communities, nature and/or wildlife conservancy, supporting the staff and initiating activities e.g. in the field of art, music or sports. The volunteers are not and shall not substitute professionally trained staff but are defined to be an additional value to the host organization.

The target of the IJFD program is not limited to the period of the voluntary activity but aims to promote civic engagement after the service and sees the volunteers as multipliers for intercultural understanding and awareness about global issues.

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4. Profiles and responsibilities

Volunteer profile

- 18-28 years old, secondary school leaving certificate, in general German citizen or resident
- Strong motivation to do a voluntary service and to make a commitment
- Participation in the entire training program of IB VAP
- Language skills, practical skills, practical experiences generally on a non-professional level
- Open-minded, willing to learn, good communication skills, interested in the cultures and economic situations of the host country and developmental issues, prepared to get involved and make an active contribution

Partners/ host organizations

- offers a voluntary service placement and involves the volunteer according to the IJFD guidelines
- provides board and lodging for the volunteer or covers the costs
- has the motivation to work with volunteers and openness to intercultural learning
- provides professional induction and guidance
- provides personal support for the volunteer (mentoring)
- has sufficient infrastructure in place (staff, admin., finance, etc.)
- communicates reliably with volunteers and with sending organization
- evaluates and values the voluntary service

IB VAP/ sending organizations – Profile and Tasks

- approves and supports the host placements
- pre-selects and supports the volunteers
- implements and coordinates the program and assures the quality
- has experiences with working with volunteers and partner organizations abroad
- provides specialized training program to the volunteer before, during and after the service
- provides insurance, pocket money, covers costs for board and lodging (if applicable) for the volunteer
- has sufficient office infrastructure in place (staff, admin., finance, etc.)
- communicates reliably with volunteers and with host organization
- provides an emergency contact and crisis management
- evaluates and values the voluntary service and the cooperation with the host organization
- issues a certificate with the support of the host organization

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5. Implementation of cooperation in the IJFD program

Before starting to host volunteers the host organization has to undergo an accreditation process in the IJFD-program together with the sending organization by:

- describing its profile, its aims and structure, target group, regular activities
- laying down its motivation to work with volunteers and describing the areas where volunteers shall become involved and the desired profile of the volunteers
- signing a contract with the sending organization

6. regular time-frame

September to April: application period for volunteer candidates, orientation and pre-selection seminars (3 days), process of matching (interests, motivation and skills of volunteers with the offered placements) professionally accompanied by the pedagogues of IB VAP

January to June: after the orientation process, IB VAP proposes a volunteer candidate to the host organization (volunteer sends his/her application: CV and motivation letter). Volunteer and host organization get into contact with each other and the host organization decides if it wants to work with the volunteer.
Given the approval from the partner organization, IB VAP signs a contract with the volunteer and supports the volunteer and host organization in the preparation process

June to August: training program (approx. 10 days) for volunteers provided by the sending organization

August to September: arrival of volunteers in host country/at the host organization
induction phase with orientation seminar offered by IB VAP and induction on place from the host organization

January/February mid-term evaluation seminar provided by IB VAP

July to August evaluation and valuing of the volunteers and partner-cooperation
final seminar in Germany provided by the sending organization

ongoing processes: contact and exchange between volunteers, host organization, IB VAP
organization about situation, changes, agreements, timings,
problems/conflicts
feedback and reporting

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7. Financing

Within the IJFD program the costs for pocket money, insurance of the volunteers, seminars, organizational and pedagogical support are only partially covered. Volunteers are asked to raise funds for the remaining funding gap.

Due to the limited financing of the IJFD program it is generally not possible for us or the volunteers to cover the costs for board and lodging. The hosting organization is therefore responsible for providing a basic accommodation and board or giving them a monthly allowance to cover these costs.

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