

## Information for current and potential host organisations of Volunteers' Abroad Programs – IB VAP FAQ

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### 1. What is IB?

The Internationaler Bund - short IB - is one of the bigger independent organisations committed to both youth and social work as well as to education and vocational training in Germany. IB is a non-partisan and non-sectarian organisation which lives up to the spirit of international partnership and to humanitarian service for the benefit of man. We are a non-profit making institution financed by membership contributions, donations and subsidies from public agencies.

### 2. What is IB VAP?

IB VAP stands for Volunteers' Abroad Programs. Every year, two IB VAP Teams (one located in Kassel, the other one in Fuerth/Franken) send out young German volunteers aged between 18 and 28 years to our host organisations worldwide. Usually, the voluntary services start in August/September and end in July/August the following year. About 150 young people are currently participating in the Volunteers' Abroad Programs in various countries in Europe, Africa, Latin and North America as well as in Australia, New Zealand and India.

### 3. What is voluntary service all about?

Performing voluntary service abroad means showing commitment to peace, justice and dialogue between different cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, in a world that is more and more globalized, an international voluntary service contributes in a significant way to the personal development of young people.

By getting in touch with other religions, cultures, political and historical characteristics, the volunteers gain intercultural competence. In this way, their scope of comprehension widens as they get a better grasp of social and political structures on a global basis. The experiences also make them very likely to remain actively engaged in social reform processes on a sustainable level.

#### 4. In which contexts can volunteers be employed?

- Social care for children, adolescents (in schools and homes), elderly people and persons with disabilities, as well as other vulnerable and/or disadvantaged persons
- In the field of human rights, education and development, sexual education,
- Communal work
- Nature conservancy

#### 5. What programs does IB VAP work with?

IB VAP implements the following programs:

- *weltwärts* (financially supported by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, BMZ)
  - IJFD – International Youth Voluntary Service (financially supported by the German Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women and Youth, BMFSFJ)
  - IB Volunteers (IB-own voluntary service, non-financially supported)
- ➔ The volunteers should contribute a certain amount to every program we offer because the financial support by the German Government does not cover all costs

#### 6. What is *weltwärts*?

*weltwärts* is a voluntary service initiated in 2008 and partially financed by the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

**Formal requirements for volunteers:** Aged between 18 and 28, German nationality or permanent right of residence in Germany, high school graduation and good knowledge of a spoken language in the host country

**Start:** Generally in August/ September

**Duration:** Generally 12 months

**Volunteers' benefits:** monthly pocket money of at least 100 €, social insurance, including health insurance coverage, unemployment, pension and accident insurance, travel costs, pedagogical guidance, analytic preparation and evaluation seminars, adequate accommodation and food according to the standards in the host country.

#### 7. What is IJFD?

IJFD stands for International Youth Voluntary Service and is partially financed by the German Ministry of Family, Elderly People, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ). It was initiated in 2011.

**Formal requirements for volunteers:** Aged between 18 and 26, German nationality or permanent residence in Germany, good knowledge of a spoken language in the host country

**Start:** Generally in July/August

**Duration:** Generally 12 months

**Return services:** monthly pocket money of at least 100 €, social insurance, including health insurance coverage, unemployment, pension and accident insurance, pedagogical guidance, analytic preparation and evaluation seminars, adequate accommodation and food according to the customs in the host country.

#### **8. Why do young German people want to go abroad for a voluntary service?**

They want to:

- Do something meaningful
- Help people with scarce resources
- Make first professional experiences
- Improve their language skills
- Accomplish their own projects and ideas
- Learn to be independent and leave their childhood homes

#### **9. How old are the volunteers sent by IB VAP to their host organisations?**

The majority of the German volunteers we send out has just finished school and is typically aged between 18 and 20. Nevertheless, IB tries to attract young people until the age of 28 years who might have started their education at university or already obtained a degree.

#### **10. Do the volunteers have specific skills?**

Most of the young people who volunteer have just finished school. They are very committed, but most of them lack specific skills and therefore require on-the-job training upon arrival in your organisation. That is why it is very important for the volunteers to have a mentor within your organisation who can help them to grow into their role, especially in the beginning. Given the challenges the volunteers are facing, regular meetings with their mentors throughout the year will be greatly beneficial to them.

#### **11. How does the selection of applicants work?**

IB's goal consists of getting to know the applicants in a very intensive and personal way in order to find out which volunteer fits in which project. When IB chooses an applicant for a particular job, the person will be presented to the host organisation by email or letter of motivation. This means that **the host organisation decides** which applicant they want to work with.

#### **12. What needs to be done by the host organisations in order to host a volunteer?**

- Generally, the host organisation provides accommodation and food for the volunteer, either within the organisation, or outside ensuring that the volunteer is accommodated in a secure place and has access to food.
- If possible, the host organisation should provide pocket money for the volunteer that corresponds to the costs of living in the host country.
- A contract between the host organisation and Internationaler Bund as sending organisation is to be signed in order to clarify all statutory rules
- During the voluntary service, the volunteer has the right to holidays in accordance with the employment law in the host country.

- The host organisation contributes in an essential way to the success of the voluntary service, assuring an adequate initiation, employment and guidance of the volunteers. In order to achieve these goals, it is requested to assign a mentor who is personally responsible for the volunteer(s).
- If possible, the volunteer(s) should be allowed to attend the mid-term meeting in the host country which is organized by IB for the purpose of reflecting on the time passed so far and the remaining months.
- Applicable for IB VAP Franken only: an extra agreement is signed every year to define the exact number of volunteers to be hosted during that year.

**13. Who are the people involved in a voluntary service?**

- You as the host organisation with a mentor for day-to-day guidance of the volunteer
- The volunteer(s)
- IB as the sending organization
- In some countries, there is also an external mentor who is not working within your organisation but who is available as a contact person to support both you and the volunteer in case the need for mediation of any problems arises

**14. What are the benefits of hosting an international volunteer?**

- A multicultural (working) atmosphere
- If you work with elderly people, it is great to have somebody young around working with you in an intergenerational way
- The volunteers are young, that means they come along with a lot of enthusiasm
- Volunteers show a different vision of work, and a lot of potential for innovation
- Hosting an international volunteer means an exchange process for the volunteer, the IB and for the host organization

**15. I cannot find the information I am looking for here, how can I contact IB VAP?**

If you are an organisation from a country in Latin America, or from the USA, Australia, New Zealand or the UK please contact:

Internationaler Bund Franken

Internationale Freiwilligendienste – IB VAP

Mathildenstraße 40, 90762 Fuerth, Germany

Tel.: 0049 911 766108-134

E-Mail: [VAP-Franken@Internationaler-Bund.de](mailto:VAP-Franken@Internationaler-Bund.de)

If you are an organisation from a country in Africa, India, Israel, France, Italy, Poland, UK or Spain, please contact:

Internationaler Bund Kassel

Internationale Freiwilligendienste – IB VAP

Königsplatz 57, 34117 Kassel, Germany

Tel.: 0049 561 574637-0

E-Mail: [VAP-Kassel@Internationaler-Bund.de](mailto:VAP-Kassel@Internationaler-Bund.de)