



Freundeskreis / Ökodorf e.V.

Call for Volunteers! Interested in living and working for several months in a German Ecovillage?

Sieben Linden Ecovillage is looking for **two young volunteers (18-30 y.)** from all over Europe!

Sieben Linden Ecovillage is an intentional community in a very rural area in the North of Germany.

We are living with 150 people of all ages in a newly-built village where we strive to organize all aspects of our life in a way that we have a low ecological footprint.

www.siebenlinden.org

From March to October 2020 (8 months), we are offering the chance to live in Sieben Linden as an European Solidarity Corps (ESC)-volunteer.



The total sum of working time is **32,5 hours per week.**

Each volunteer has **two different working areas with different main focus (please apply for your favorite):**

- 1a) sustainable food (25h/week) **OR**
- 1b) sustainable education (25h/week) *

+ 2) individual projects (7,5h/week - free choice)

* Allocation of working hours to tasks and working areas can vary, e.g. a whole week could be taken for project work, reducing project time during other weeks. **Volunteers work a maximum of two weekends per month in the kitchen or guest department.** They get two consecutive days off during the week for every weekend that they work. Some volunteers actually like this arrangement because it gives the option to place free days adjacent to another weekend resulting in 4 consecutive days off without using up any holidays. **Volunteers have 2 days holidays per month.**

1a) SUSTAINABLE FOOD (25 h/week)

The volunteer joins the kitchen team that prepares two warm meals for both the community and the guests every day for 40-100 people.

The volunteers get to experience a large variety of sustainable practices related to food. The kitchen serves vegan and vegetarian food. A (mostly) plant based diet is more sustainable than eating lots of animal products which consume way more resources during their production. Most vegetables (ca. 70%) are produced locally in the ecovillages gardens, using also produce that does not meet market standards therefore reducing food waste. The volunteer engages in many steps of the food cycle and seasonal activities: harvesting (fruit, wild plants), preservation techniques (drying, fermentation, preserves), cooking and baking, learning a wide range of techniques and recipes, as well as relevance of different activities for a sustainable lifestyle. As part of the service, he/she supports the cooks with meal preparation, mainly cleaning and preparing vegetables and occasional cleaning tasks. This routine work (15 hours a week or less) is balanced with more creative tasks. Volunteers are encouraged to gradually take on responsibility for preparing dishes or whole meals of their own. Past volunteers arrived with very different skill levels: sometimes we start with "how to cook rice", sometimes volunteers bring or even create their own recipes. If volunteers feel confident enough, we encourage them to prepare whole meals for an appropriate group size (20-40 people usually).

We ask them to prepare typical recipes from their country for the community contributing to cultural exchange.

We offer a variety of additional tasks for the volunteers to choose from, e.g.

- picking wild food plants
- making preserves: sauerkraut and pickles, jam, vegetable chips etc.
- working in the herb garden
- baking cakes

1b) SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION (25 h/week)

The volunteer joins the guest service team that takes care of the physical well-being of our guests who come for seminars on different aspects of sustainability like strawbale building, permaculture, organic gardening, community building, non-violent communication and many more. While at work, the volunteers are confronted with a lot of sustainable practices as part of their daily work and life. Why are we using only biodegradable shampoo and cleaning agents? Why are we eating vegan and vegetarian food? How do compost toilets work? Why are we using wood for heating? Organic and home-made cleaning agents? And what are effective microorganisms? Volunteers have a lot of interaction with the guests and convey their newly acquired sustainability knowledge to them as the guests ask these and other questions that become part of the volunteers daily routines. Sometimes the volunteers can participate in certain lectures that are part of seminars to deepen their sustainability knowledge (not considered working time). Some tasks of the volunteer are to be considered routine work that is repetitive but partly also includes interesting social interaction with the guests.

These tasks are:

- preparing breakfast
- setting up the dining room for mealtimes, being available for the guests during meals and clean-up afterwards
- preparing sleeping-rooms for guests
- outdoor work on the camping area
- supporting the reception on arrival days (Fridays and Sundays)
- household work e.g. laundry

These tasks take up maximum 15 hours a week.

Other tasks depend on the interests, skills and motivation of volunteers. The team supports the volunteer to find tasks that the volunteer is eager to take on. These can include:

- offering a kids program and child care during certain seminars
- baking cake (for certain seminars only)
- sewing and mending of pillows, blankets, sheets etc.
- renovating/painting guest rooms

Past volunteers have taken on a variety of smaller and bigger projects that are very diverse. One has made wall paintings in certain rooms. One has taken on a creative sewing project making curtains and other decorations for guest room including choosing the fabric and style. One has created a poster on garbage separation. Volunteers have participated in upcycling projects creating a new destination for tetrapaks or have produced homemade oatmilk for a big event. The team supports the volunteers own ideas and offers inspiration and examples. The team meets once a week to check in with everyone including the volunteers to support team spirit and everyone's well being in the team.

+ 2) INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS (7,5 h/week)

Numerous options for big or small projects are available, chosen according to the volunteers inclination, skills and confidence. The volunteer coordinator supports by suggesting suitable project. These projects are the volunteers own choice. They should either have a direct link to sustainability or a clear solidarity aspect. These activities can be related to existing projects and activities in Sieben Linden Ecovillage (or the region) or they can be the volunteer's own initiative and they should benefit either the host organisation and/or the local community.

Some examples could be:

- creating beauty outdoors and indoor
- contributing to events like open days, summer camp etc.
- PR activities e.g. blogging, photo shooting, social media activity
- dissemination of the project e.g. at school
- supporting people in need e.g. elders, the chronically or severely ill, young or single parents etc.
- activities with children and youth

What else?

During the ESC, the volunteers will have health-insurance, full board and lodging covered, travel-expenses reimbursed and they will receive an amount of **5 Euro pocket-money per day**.

The European Volunteers will be part of the group of young volunteers of Sieben Linden that participate in other volunteering schemes (i.e. „JuLe-evening“).

The **small community of around ten young volunteers („Kolibri-group“)** is a sub-community of the big community of Sieben Linden Ecovillage.

The two ESC-volunteers will share a caravan with two bedrooms which is situated at the „Young-people’s place namend Kolibris“ in Sieben Linden, where all young volunteers are living. All volunteers together share a kitchen and living-room and use the sanitary facilities in the main community house. It’s quite simple living conditions – with wood-stoves in the caravan and some distance between caravan and sanitary facilities. It’s embedded in the bigger community of Sieben Linden and the young volunteers have the chance to fully participate in the community life of Sieben Linden and in the sub-community of the young volunteers.



The weekly **JuLe-evening (JuLe = “Junge Leute” = “Young People”)** offers time and space for the young villagers aged in between ca. 15 and 30 and including both volunteers and permanent residents (young people who have grown up here). The evening is hosted by a team of experienced facilitators from the ecovillage with backgrounds in youth work, social work and personality trainings. They offer topic-related evenings as well as methods of meditation, reflection, communication, role plays, adventure education, drama play, movie screenings, etc. The evenings aim to bring the young people together, to provide a close company for them in a phase of orientation and development and to overall introduce the young people into the values, methods and cultural approaches developed or used within the culture of ecovillages and intentional communities.



The community and working language in Sieben Linden is **German**. That’s why some basic knowledge of German and the strong intention to improve your German skills is a prerequisite for participating in the ESC. The Erasmus+ Programs offers online-learning-tools to improve your German skills before coming here.

Interested in a sustainable lifestyle? Interested in immersion in a community like Sieben Linden (what is Sieben Linden? See below)? Interested in experiencing new working fields? Then apply for an ESC in Sieben Linden!

Please contact our head of volunteer coordination Freundeskreis Ökodorf e.V.:
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What is Sieben Linden Ecovillage?



Philosophy, Politics and Culture

Climate change, economic crisis, exploitation of human beings and of resources... at Sieben Linden, we develop and test answers on pressing questions of our time. We share no common ideology or religion. Like a social microcosm, the diversity of our community reflects the basic issues of life. What connects us, though, is the focus on a life in harmony with the Earth und all other Earthlings.

Ecology

At Sieben Linden, the greater goal is a reduction of our ecological footprint in all aspects of life. So far, we have cut it down to 2,500 kg CO₂-equivalents per head which translates into one third of the average ecological footprint in Germany. Resulting from our special focus on closed energy and resource cycles, it extends to the solar energy and hot water supply, to building with natural and regional resources like straw, clay and timber as well as to organic gardening for our food supply. Moreover, we enhance the populated area and its ecosystems by preserving and creating diverse habitats for flora and fauna.



Social Life

By living together we aim at integrating individual needs into the communal life every day. Transparency and trust building amongst us, true and attentive communication, mutual appreciation and broad-based decision-making are fundamental tools towards this goal. Living together in full awareness represents a collective learning process of humans of all ages and social backgrounds.



Economy

The communal project is a legal entity and stands on an equal footing. Land and infrastructure belong to the inhabitants as they are all shareholders of a co-operative. Our domestic budgets are our own responsibility. We seek for everyone to find their place in the whole. Thus, dispositions can become professions and new occupational challenges be embraced. Money entering the Ecovillage circulates here several times

before leaving it again.

Dedication and Education

Responsibility for a future worth living on this planet doesn't end at the fringes of the ecovillage. Through different initiatives and networks many of us are actively involved in society. Experiences and knowledge that we accumulate in Sieben Linden are offered in seminars and participatory workshops directly to people from all over the world.



For more informations, please check: www.siebenlinden.org

