

Volunteering in Pondicherry and Auroville

In Pondicherry and Auroville many NGOs are active to improve the life situation of the people in need. Additionally interesting initiatives related to organic farming are located in Auroville. Kulturstudier is/was in contact with some of them and provide here a short list with addresses for students who are interested in experiencing India from the perspective as a volunteer.

1) Sharana

Sharana is a social and development organization based in Pondicherry, India. It was established in July 2000 to address the critical educational needs of socio-economically disadvantaged children and communities in urban Pondicherry and its surrounding villages.

Sharana's mission is twofold:

- A. To enable socio-economically disadvantaged children in the Pondicherry environs to fully claim their rights to education by developing social programs, building physical infrastructure, and identifying sources of financial support.
- B. To work for community development by supporting and increasing beneficiaries' awareness of their own skills and capabilities, while respecting each individual's self-worth and capacity to achieve full independence and self-reliance.

Sharana volunteers are expected to be:

- Reasonably proficient in English;
- Prepared to spend some concentrated time with Sharana (we recommend 3 months);
- Adaptable, open, and prepared to learn about India;
- Self-sufficient in living in Puducherry town (though we will provide basic guidance and support);
- Financially responsible for their own housing, food, transport, living expenses etc.

Important information about the volunteering in Sharana you find here:

<http://www.sharana.org/volunteer-application/volunteer-information/>

Sharana is charging a levy of about 10000 rupees/month per volunteer to cover the cost of the volunteer towards the organisation. This is to make sure that no donations are used for this purpose.

Interested volunteers can write an email with CV and an email explaining why and how they would like to volunteer at Sharana via Homepage module.

Address: Sharana

59, Muthumariamman Koil Street

PONDICHERRY, 605001

Phone: 0413-2226023 / 0413-2220023

2) Volontariat

Volontariat is involved in activities like Child care, Educational sponsorship, Extra curricular activities, Vocational training, Child & Family Counselling, Hut renovation, Health care, Awareness etc.

Volontariat runs residential homes to take care of the abandoned aged people and children and to provide care & shelter to adolescent street boys.

Farming and agricultural activities are also activities done by them. They have a rehabilitation centre for cured leprosy and disabled persons, wherein they produce handloom fabrics and made ups for sale.

Any volunteer who comes in could give a hand in taking care of the kids in their creches. During weekend the volunteers could stay at the farm where destituted and gypsy children are staying and do some recreational activities with them. People who could provide English speaking courses, could do so with the children during the evening classes. Those who have expertise in marketing could find some avenues to market their SPIRULINE or handloom items made by the disabled. Volunteers could take a walk with the residents of the old age home along beach side or could take them for a very small picnic or make them visit the temple or church. They can also help in manual works like cleaning or washing etc.

Volontariat does not charge for voluntary work.

The duration depends on the volunteer. During summer it could be for 2 months to participate in their summer camp activities. If not it can be for 2 weeks or a month. But it all depends on the current prevailing situation. If Volontariat already has ample volunteers, they may not be able to welcome new or more volunteers at that time. It also depends on the motivation and capacity of the volunteers to contribute towards the organisation.

Volontariat has 2 guest rooms, but they are often booked and occupied by their own committee people from Europe. But as Volontariat is located not far from the Center it is easy to find a Guesthouse nearby.

Contact person is Sendil Coumarane
54, Ambekar Salai, Nethaji Nagar I
Oupalam Pondichery 605001 - India
Phone : 0091 (0) 413 23.57.677/78
E-mail: volont@volontariat.in>
Web: www.volontariat-inde.org

3) AuroOrchad Farm in Auroville

AuroOrchard is a farm which grows organically fruits and vegetables and produces eggs for the community of Auroville (www.auroville.org)
AuroOrchad is not a NGO but a service of Auroville.

The volunteers works consist in helping in the organic conversion, and taking care of the vegetables: weeding, mulching, pruning, harvesting, composting, shredding. AuroOrchad staff spends time with the volunteers explaining the work and teaching organic farming techniques. Working hours are Monday to Friday, 7.30 to 12, which leaves the afternoons free for exploring Auroville and its various activities. A snack is offered at 9.00.

AuroOrchad doesn't request any financial contribution for volunteering at AuroOrchad.

No minimum duration of volunteering is required. Only informing, being on time and regular is expected.

AuroOrchad has no accommodation possibilities but volunteers can stay at the International House, not very far from the farm. The price is 250 rps/night. Their email is uspavilion@auroville.org.in

Contact persons are Flore & Christian
Auroorchard in Auroville

Tel: +91 8098160340

Mail: Flore <flodepressigny@gmail.com> and Christian Tarpin <xian.tarpin@gmail.com>

More information: www.facebook.com/AuroOrchard

4) Buddha Garden in Auroville

The Buddha Garden is a community farm in Auroville which is doing sustainable farming. They have volunteers from all over the world.

Their work consists of a lot of clearing up: cutting down and pruning trees as well as mulching trees. There is always a lot of weeding, bed preparation and planting to do at all times of the year. Buddha Garden is also doing courses in organic food growing.

The basic conditions for staying in Buddha Garden are as follows: the minimum stay is two weeks and one can stay as long as one likes.

The contribution to Buddha Garden is in work and in money. The work contribution made by everyone who stays in Buddha Garden is 6.15-9.00am every day Monday to Friday.

There are two extra afternoon sessions on Wednesday and on Friday in the kitchen garden with Pierre.

The financial contribution is Rs250/person/day for the first four weeks and includes accommodation, contribution to Auroville, breakfast Monday to Friday and WiFi internet connection. This reduces to Rs150/person/day for the rest of the time after that.

The volunteers are asked to bring their own bedding – maybe a sheet sleeping bag or ordinary sheets. If one doesn't have them Buddha Garden will have some to buy.

For more information about volunteering and to see pictures of the farm go to website:

http://www.buddhagarden.org/main.php?nav=farm_volunteer&sec_id=2&id=47

On this webpage one can also find out about all aspects of Buddha Garden. It is also possible to download for free their latest book 'A Walk Around Buddha Garden' which is on the home page of the website. The daily diary work can be seen here:

http://www.buddhagarden.org/main.php?nav=farm_education&sec_id=5&id=90

An important thing to mention is that all of Buddha Garden is a non smoking area. If smoking is important to you please think carefully as to whether Buddha Garden is the right place for you to stay.

The staff is also helping in arrival guidance if needed.

Contact person is Priya

Co-ordinator Buddha Garden

Auroville near Pondicherry

E-mail: buddhagardenav@gmail.com

Web: <http://www.buddhagarden.org>

5) Adecom

Adecom is a very indian and small grassroot NGO. The main activities of Adecom are: empowering the rural people, giving awareness to rural people about their rights, giving lively skills to rural people, conducting Focused Group Discussion, Giving awareness to SHG'S about their activities, conducting campaigning for violence against women.

The volunteer work would consist in English report complaint, mapping, making projects, organising awareness programme among people, creating the space for illiterate people to adopting new knowledge.

The costs for the volunteers are 50 rupees for food per person, and two times tea also in a day.

The volunteer itself decides how many weeks he/she want to participate in the activities with Adecom. Minimum time work is 5 hours a day, 5 days per week.

Adecom has an accommodation opportunity for 700 rupees per day, with double cot and AC.

Contact person is Ms. P. Lalidamballe, Managing Trustee,
ADECOM Network
No, 1, 3rd Main Road, Chellampappu Nagar,
(Back side of Velankani Matriculation School)
Reddiarpalaym, Pondicherry-605 010
Mobile: +91 9442525273 (P.Lalida) +91 9486947940 (S.Perumal)
Email: adecomn@gmail.com, adecomn5@gmail.com, lalida@sify.com
Web: <http://www.adecomnetwork.org/>
Blog: <http://adecomnetwork.wordpress.com>

6) Primetrust

Prime Trust is also a very small indian NGO and involved with the following projects:

Women Empowerment Programs: Micro Credit / Vocational Training Programs on Tailoring / Embroidery / Handicrafts making / Handmade Printing / Teaching English in the rural community / Guidance and Counseling / Water and Sanitation.

Integrated Child Development Programs: Home for the abandoned girl children / Child Sponsorship Programs / Children's Parliament / Remedial Schools / Teaching of English in the slum community.

Awareness Generation Programs: HIV/AIDS / Nutrition / Health and Hygiene / Mental Illness / Diabetes / Cancer / Domestic Violence / Women Rights / Child Rights / Environment / Consumer Awareness.

The volunteer would involve with the above said programs along with the regular staff members. Primetrust expect the volunteers to

- Make new programs
- Update the existing programs
- Make the programs more sustainable by finding out resources
- Provide suggestions and guidance for the organisation to improve its quality of work
- Finding out new volunteers to carry out the mission of Prime Trust

- Finding out partner agencies who could support our programs

The volunteering would cost money as Prime Trust is a grass root NGO and depending on volunteers and their contribution for its survival.

The cost is as follows:

1. Registration Fee: Rs.15,000/- (one time)
2. Accommodation Fee: Rs.300/- per day (Optional)
3. Transfer from Chennai air port and back: Rs.3000/- x 2 = Rs.6000/- (Optional)

Volunteers are accepted without any time duration. They can stay for a short period or for a long duration.

The accommodation is available with Prime Trust. They provide clean and neat rooms with a common kitchen, Common/shared toilets, WiFi connectivity, purified drinking water etc., It costs Rs.300/- per day.

Primetrust has a dedicated Volunteer Coordinator who takes care of volunteers and plan for their daily schedule.

Contact person is Mr. S.Maria Arasu,
Director, Prime Educational and Social Trust,
10, 9th, Cross, Rainbow Nagar, Puducherry - 605 011, INDIA
Tel: +91-413-2214652
Mobile: +91-94432 87622 / +91-94874 67622
Email: admin@primetrust.org
Web: www.primetrust.org
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