



ESC TEAM

at the

Ostello dei Balocchi

Parco Nazionale
dell'Appennino Tosco Emiliano

18/04/26 - 18/05/26





ASSOCIAZIONE DI PROMOZIONE SOCIALE JOINT

Associazione Joint is an association based in Milan, active since 2003.

We offer to young people international mobility opportunities and non-formal education (Erasmus+ Programme, European Solidarity Corps, international youth exchanges, training courses, and more).

We are the coordinating organisation of this project: we handle the selection of volunteers, prepare the necessary documents, and provide the initial and final trainings.



ESC VOLUNTEERING TEAMS IN HIGH PRIORITY AREAS

RISE is the title of a series of projects developed by Associazione Joint and is part of the program ESC Volunteering Teams in High Priority Areas (VTHPA).

VTHPA are large projects, that enable young people aged 18 to 30, to carry out short-term, impactful volunteering to tackle key EU societal challenges.

The goal is to promote solidarity by engaging youth and organizations in quality activities that strengthen cohesion, democracy, and citizenship in Europe.



Where the volunteering will take place?



Ostello dei Balocchi will be the hosting organisation in the project and the main place of the activities.

Ostello dei Balocchi is located in Casalino di Ligonchio, at 1000 meters above sea level, in the province of Reggio Emilia, right in the heart of the Tuscan-Emilian Apennine National Park and the UNESCO MAB Apennine Area. The little donkeys how live in the hostel get to enjoy a stunning natural setting all year round!



The Hostel is about 45 minutes (5 km) along a trail to get to the first village called Ligonchio; 65 km from Reggio Emilia, Parma, and Modena, and 90 km from Lucca.



If living for a month surrounded by nature in an isolated area, away from all the usual comforts, isn't your vibe, this project might not be your cup of tea—so feel free to stop reading here!



Ostello dei Balocchi who they are and what they do

The Ostello dei Balocchi is an Environmental Education Center (EEC) managed by Legambiente Ligonchio, an association of young volunteers who have chosen to live in the Apennines.

The Ostello has become a dynamic and multicultural place, active at local, regional, and European levels. Its commitment stands out for educational innovation, environmental sustainability, and local cultural and tourist development.

Located in the Tuscan-Emilian Apennine National Park, it is the only one offering tourism with donkeys, a symbol of local traditions. The hostel also offers educational-artistic workshops that encourage reflection and personal sensitivity through experience. It is a reference point for families and schools seeking educational moments and holidays in contact with nature.

[Watch this video to learn more.](#)

BASIC INFO

When: 18/04/26 - 18/05/26.

On arrival training: first 2 days.

Who: 15 volunteers aged 18-30.

Pocket money: 17€ a day (the traveling expenses, visa and insurance costs are NOT included).

Accommodation: Triple or double rooms with an inner bathroom.

Activities: Volunteers will have activities 4 days per week from 8:30 to 18:00 with breaks, for maximum 36 working hours per week.

Days off: Volunteers will have 3 days off per week (Friday, Saturday & Sunday)

Meals: Breakfast (Italian basic - sweet breakfast) + Lunch + Dinner.

The meals will be prepared by the volunteers.

Any additional food or beverages will be at the volunteer's own expense.



Activities

In the first days of the project you will have on arrival training when you will learn more about the hostel, the daily tasks, some rules and the other volunteers in order to create a familiar space where everyone can feel comfortable together.

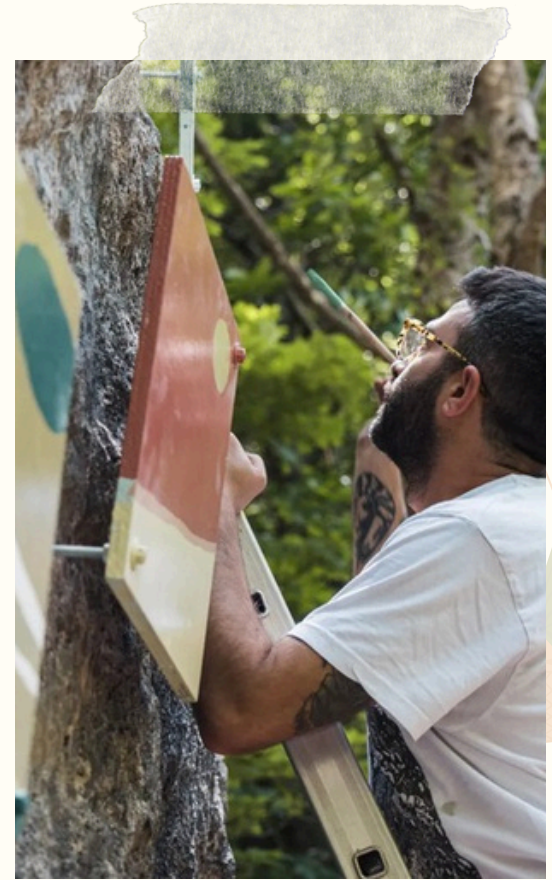
Meal preparation is part of the volunteers' daily activities: cooking will be done in shifts in groups of three people.

Most activities will take place outdoor at the Ostello dei Balocchi venue and in the **Ravin'art park**: a regenerating artistic path in nature, managed by Ostello dei Balocchi, that engages communities through participatory works. These site-specific creations stem from artist-community collaborations, enhancing cultural heritage and youth inclusion.

For any activities held at other locations, the hosting organization will arrange and provide transportation.

Please note that if you are working or studying and need to dedicate time to those commitments, you will not be able to join this project.

The project requires your full availability: activities may take place from morning to evening, and in your free time, it is advisable to rest, travel around Italy, and spend quality time with the group



Activities

Maintenance & hostel taking care:

- Building maintenance in the Ravin'art
- Green area maintenance;
- Cleaning the path leading to Ligonchio.

Donkey care & trekking:

- Donkey care sessions outside;
- Trekking with donkeys.

Educational & social activities:

- Visit the Atelier of Onda in Onda;
- Intercultural meeting with seniors.



More useful info

The hostel is surrounded by nature. There is only one bar/pizzeria 50 meters from the hostel (which is convenient if you who want to grab a pizza without taking the car! :P)

The nearest supermarket, where we will do our shopping, is in **Reggio Emilia** (65 km from the hostel). Yes, because there is just a small shop in **Ligonchio** (5 km) where we can find a few food items. But no panic, there's also a pharmacy in Ligonchio!!! More logistical details will be provided elsewhere...

Free WI-FI will be available at the main areas of the hostel. Once you arrive at the venue, we will provide you with the password and other information. Please note, internet connection might not be stable due to the high altitude of the place or weather conditions.

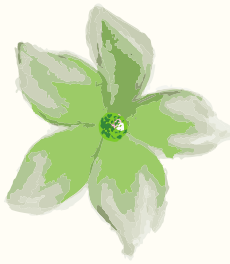
Sheets and a hairdryer will be provided. Volunteers should bring their own towels and personal toiletries (on the next slide, you will find more information about what to bring).

Ah, and there is a washing machine!

Watch this virtual tour to access the hostel's accommodation!



We kindly ask you to bring:



- Volunteer should bring with them European Health Insurance Card (EHIC “blue” card);
- We recommend bringing a sleeping bag because - weather permitting - there will be one night spent in tents!!!
- Warm clothes! We are in a mountain environment, April and May are not yet spring, with an estimated temperature of 12°.
- Comfortable hiking or sport shoes;
- Working clothes, something that can get dirty;
- Slippers;
- A reusable water bottle to keep with you;
- Towels;
- Your medication, if you take any;
- It would be delightful if you would bring some typical food from your country to share with the other volunteers;



Volunteer profile



- aged 18 to 30;
- legal resident or citizen of an EU country;
- interested in living in a precious and protected environment far from the chaos;
- ready for activities with donkeys;
- open for physical or manual work and “get hands dirty”;
- ready for trekking experiences;
- ready to cook for yourself and others;
- ready to share private spaces with the team
- be open minded;
- positive and peaceful attitude;
- flexibility to adapt to possible changes;
- proactive and respectful;
- ready to go out from comfort zone, experiment, and explore;
- at least intermediate knowledge of English.

Role of Associazione Joint:

Coordinating organization, responsible for selecting candidates, on arrival training and bureaucratic matters (activity agreement and pocket money).

Joint website: <https://associazionejoint.org/>

IG page: [associazionejoint_milano](#)

Role of Ostello dei Balocchi:

Host organization, responsible for mentoring and managing activities on site.

Ostello website: <https://www.ostellodeibalocchi.it/>

IG page: [ostellodeibalocchi](#)

**Please, send your CV and motivation letter to apply.esc@associazionejoint.org
Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted back
to have an online interview.**

More about ESC: <https://youthforeurope.eu/european-solidarity-corps>