Joie et Soleil

Erasmus+ accredited host organisation · Youth exchanges in the French Alps

We open our doors for you. Welcome to our mountain retreat!





1. Organisation at a Glance

LEGAL NAME	Joie et Soleil
TYPE	Non-governmental organisation / non-formal education association
FOUNDED	1951
REGISTERED ADDRESS	Château-Arnoux-Saint-Auban, Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, France
ACTIVITY VENUE	Our own mountain holiday centre, Chauffayer (commune of Aubessagne), Hautes-Alpes, Southern French Alps — between Grenoble and Gap, at 1,000 m altitude
OID	E10055028
ERASMUS+ ACCREDITATION CODE	2023-1-FR02-KA150-YOU-000187175
ACCREDITED SINCE	2024 (Erasmus+ host organisation since 2017)
WEBSITE / SOCIAL MEDIA	https://www.joieetsoleil.com
CONTACT PERSON	Swan FAUVEAUD, consultant for Erasmus projects, Chloé HAMARD, Referent for Erasmus at Joie & Soleil ‘s board
EMAIL / PHONE	contact@joieetsoleil.com, swan@etik.com, chloehmrd@gmail.com
LANGUAGES OF WORK	English (working language of exchanges), French

2. Who We Are

Joie et Soleil is a volunteer-run popular education association founded in 1951. Our mission is to promote, support and encourage youth work and popular education for all, whatever their philosophy or religion.

We run our own mountain holiday centre, where we welcome around **220 young people every summer**. The centre is operated by **80 local volunteers** (coordination, kitchen, maintenance), supported by **1 managing youth worker and 2 young youth workers**, and by **2 qualified mountain guides**.

We have been hosting Erasmus+ youth exchanges since 2017 and hold an **Erasmus+ accreditation in the youth field (KA151-YOU)**, which allows us to host mobility activities every year without re-applying for a grant.

We are a volunteer association with no permanent administrative staff. This is our strength: partners deal directly with the people who run the project, not with an office.

3. Thematic Priorities

- Mountains, nature and outdoor education
- Environmental awareness and climate change

- Non-formal and experiential learning
- Inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities
- Intercultural dialogue and European citizenship
- Storytelling, creative expression and the arts
- Rural youth work

4. What We Offer: Two Annual Youth Exchanges

We host two one-week exchanges back to back every August, with the same hosting structure but two distinct age groups and pedagogical designs.

Exchange A — Ages 14 to 17 ·

TIMING	August (7 nights, travel days included)
CONCEPT	The mountain as a place of adventure and stories. Between dragons and wolves, participants hike, listen to local legends and learn to share their own stories in formats that suit them.
PROGRAMME	Day 1: preparation, mountain safety basics, group meeting. Days 2–5: hiking and storytelling through voice, art and imagination, with **one night in a tipi bivouac** under the stars. Day 6: reflection and celebration.
DIFFICULTY	400–850 m elevation gain per day, 7–13 km per day
GROUP WE CAN HOST	6 to 8 participants + 1 or 2 group leaders

Exchange B — Ages 18 to 22 ·

TIMING	Mid-August (7 nights, travel days included)
CONCEPT	A week to grow through experience. In the heart of the mountains, where myths and legends are born, participants hike, share their cultures and stories, and practise speaking in front of an audience around the campfire.
PROGRAMME	Day 1: preparation and group meeting. Days 2–4: three-day trek with **at least one night in mountain refuges**, with reflection and storytelling workshops along the way. Days 5–6: looking back, sharing, celebrating personal growth.
DIFFICULTY	400–1,200 m elevation gain per day, 4–9 km per day. Day 2 is demanding (1,200 m) — participants should be prepared.
GROUP WE CAN HOST	6 to 8 participants + 1 group leader

5. Our Methods

- **Learning by doing, in a real environment.** Our mountain guides do not tell stories about the mountains — they take young people to meet people who actually work there.
- **Preparation as a pedagogical moment.** Day 1 is dedicated to learning how to pack, wear and adjust a rucksack, choose boots, judge how much water to carry, and why a down jacket belongs in the bag during a heatwave.
- **Games for cohesion and safety.** “Cap Rando”, a team board game simulating a hike, introduces mountain hazards (storm, rockfall, fog, protection dogs, snow bridge crossing), map reading, altimeters, biodiversity and rescue procedures.
- **Differentiated groups.** Participants are split into two hiking groups with adapted pace, distance and elevation, so that everyone progresses at their own rhythm — and can switch groups during the day.
- **Daily debrief** with all leaders, facilitators and guides, so that feedback shapes the next day.
- **Transparency on decisions.** Routes, daily content and potential risks (incoming storm, damaged bridge, group condition) are shared openly. This has proven to prevent misunderstanding and build trust.
- **Creative restitution.** The last two days are devoted to free expression of what was lived — music, texts, images, video — followed by individual interviews on satisfaction and learning.
- **Youthpass** for every participant.

6. Track Record

Erasmus+ accredited project 2025

(KA151-YOU, project 2025-1-FR02-KA151-YOU-000297798)

ACTIVITIES	2 youth exchanges ("Living in the Mountains", 3–8 August; "Mountains and Tourism", 11–16 August)
PEOPLE INVOLVED	71 people: 62 participants, 8 group leaders, 1 companion
SENDING COUNTRIES	France, Spain, Italy, Slovenia, Armenia
PARTICIPANTS WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES	41 (66% of participants) — cultural differences, economic barriers, geographical barriers, disabilities, social barriers
GREEN TRAVEL USED	39 people (55%)
ABSORPTION RATE	94.38% of the grant
EVALUATION	100% positive feedback from group leaders on needs met, non-formal methods, practical arrangements, partnership quality and local impact

Current and past partners

Organisation	City / Country
Ayuntamiento de Miranda de Ebro	Miranda de Ebro, Spain
Comune di Pordenone	Pordenone, Italy
ZAVOD NEFIKS	Ljubljana, Slovenia
Youth Opportunities Club	Armenia
Tavo Europa	Lithuania

Recognition

Our Erasmus+ projects are cited as examples by the municipalities of Aubessagne (05), Château-Arnoux-Saint-Auban (04), Miranda de Ebro (Spain) and Pordenone (Italy). We are the only organisation running youth exchanges accredited in the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence department, and the departmental youth directorate (SDJES 04) refers other associations and municipalities to us.

7. Inclusion & Diversity — Our Signature

Inclusion is not an add-on in our projects; it shapes how we design them.

- **All-terrain wheelchair (joëlette).** A participant with a disability or a temporary injury can take part in a full day of hiking thanks to the joëlette. Our two mountain guides also run the association "Les Modestes" (founded 2021), which organises joëlette outings for people with disabilities or reduced mobility.
- **Specialised support.** For a delegation including two young people with disabilities (Down syndrome and autism), we recruited an additional specialised companion alongside the group leader.
- **Financial accessibility.** We ask a €100 participation fee.
- **Rural and isolated young people**, young jobseekers and young people with little access to international mobility are our core audience.
- **"British Village" stays.** For younger participants who cannot yet travel abroad, we run bilingual stays in France, which prepare them to join our Erasmus+ exchanges in later years.

8. Sustainability

- In 2025, with the support of the Région Sud, our centre replaced its oil boiler with **solar panels plus a pellet boiler**, covering the 1,000+ litres of hot water needed daily in summer.
- Our cooks source **locally, short supply chain and organic where possible**, notably through "Échanges Paysans" (Hautes-Alpes).

- Kitchen waste is **composted or given to neighbouring farmers** to feed their animals.
- On every mountain outing, facilitators pass on clear environmental conduct rules.
- We encourage green travel and have used it for over half of our participants.

9. Practical & Logistical Information

Venue

- Our own holiday centre at 1,000 m altitude, with an indoor workspace for workshops
- **4 dormitories: 14, 10, 10 and 8 beds** (42 beds total)
- Shared sanitary facilities
- Kitchen run by our volunteer cooks, who adapt to dietary and cultural requirements

Travel

- Meeting points: **Marseille Provence Airport** or **Aix-en-Provence TGV station**
- **We provide the bus transfer for the last 200 km to Chauffayer** — both ways
- We ask partners to **contact us before buying tickets**, especially for arrivals after 8 p.m. CET
- Please send tickets as soon as purchased so we can reimburse immediately

Preparation with partners

- An **online meeting in June** between your group leaders and our managing youth worker
- An **upstream video conference with sending organisations** to present our association, our project and the venue, so you can recruit appropriately and send us your questions and constraints
- A **second video conference with group leaders**, our directors and our mountain guides: detailed programme, expectations, mountain-specific equipment and safety instructions
- Ongoing email exchange to clarify individual cases

During the stay

- Traditional insurance **plus** daily activity insurance per person
- Loan equipment box for missing gear
- Printed daily route maps for participants and leaders
- Radio communication between groups, guides and facilitators

Preparation requested from sending organisations

Each delegation prepares **one evening**: a national speciality meal (ingredients list to be sent in advance; local products bought in your country are reimbursed on presentation of receipts) and a presentation of your country and traditions. These evenings have consistently been the strongest moments of group bonding.

Equipment briefing using the packing list we provide (bed sheet, 40 l rucksack with rain cover, 3 l water, sun protection, hiking boots with grip, rain jacket and trousers, warm layers, headlamp; sleeping bag for the bivouac night, travel liner for the hut night).

10. What We Are Looking For

We are currently looking for **sending organisations** able to bring groups of **6 to 8 young people with 1 or 2 group leaders**, for either of our two exchanges:

Exchange	Ages	Period
Exchange A — Mountains of Stories	14–17	Early August
Exchange B — Mountains of Legends	18–21	Mid-August

Ideal profile of a partner

- An organisation working regularly with young people aged 14–22, ideally with limited access to international mobility (rural areas, economic or social barriers, disabilities)
- Leaders able to commit to the two preparation video conferences and to the “national evening”
- **Groups comfortable with walking 4 to 13 km per day with elevation gain in mountain terrain**
- Organisations from Programme Countries and from partner countries are equally welcome — we have successful experience with Spain, Italy, Slovenia, Lithuania and Armenia

What we bring to the partnership

- An accredited host organisation: no application needed on your side, we handle the grant
- Full board accommodation in our own centre, transfers, insurance, programme and qualified mountain guides
- A stable team, a proven quality process, and a direct line to the people running the project

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