



Quality Standards of the Voluntary Ecological Year in Bavaria

Developed and realized by the FÖJ-departments of the three accepted organizations,
responsible for the FÖJ in Bavaria: BDKJ, EJB and JBN



Foreword

The following quality standards document the long experience and successful practice in ecological education of the funding Body of the FÖJ (BDKJ, EJB and JBN). They are an important part of Bildung für Nachhaltige Entwicklung (BNE) in Bavaria.

Based on principles of the work with youth associations like participation and self-organization, around two thousand voluntaries have by now received the competence to create a livable future because of the FÖJ.

Because of the support and financial aid of the Free State of Bavaria the initial number of seventy participants could be increased to more than two hundred voluntaries a year.

The productive and fruitful collaboration in the FÖJ funding body, which exists since nearly twenty years, is the result of previous consequent further education and the basis of future consequent further education of quality demands. In so doing adequate answers to social processes and challenges can and will be developed together with the employment locations and committed voluntaries.

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1. Admission of employment locations and application procedure of the FÖJ

1.1 Selection and admission of appropriate employment locations

- 1.1.1 The employment locations are accepted by the funding body of the FÖJ in a formal acceptance procedure.
- 1.1.2 The criteria for the acceptance are fixed in written form by the funding body after clearance with the StMUG.
- 1.1.3 The employment locations and the applying institutions receive a substantial information package.

1.2 Transparent and goal orientated application procedure and conciliation proceedings

- 1.2.1 Interested adolescents get the application documents, which are valid for all of the three responsible bodies in Bavaria, sent to them.
- 1.2.2 During the application procedure interested adolescents receive enough Information about the frame conditions, possibilities, rights and responsibilities of the FÖJ.
- 1.2.3 The responsible body of the FÖJ conveys and enables the contacting between applicants and employment locations.
- 1.2.4 The responsible body of the FÖJ ensures that interested adolescents can choose between several employment locations.
- 1.2.5 The responsible body ensures, that every application is considered and that nobody gets discriminated
- 1.2.6 The responsible ensures that an interview is conducted before a contract is closed at the employment location.
- 1.2.7 The responsible advises the employment locations on the execution of interviews.

2. Employment and mentoring of the participants in the employment location

2.1 The FÖJ as an ecological year of education and orientation

- 2.1.1** The responsible body expresses written standards, which have to be adhered to by the employment locations, and ensures that the employment location does not deviate from them.
- 2.1.2** The participants are inserted at appropriate, ecological fields of activity. They get insight into at least two different focuses of activity. suitable fields of activity are:
- Environmental pedagogy
 - Nature protection/ landscape work
 - Animal protection/ keep of animals
 - controlled ecological agriculture
 - Forestry
 - building ecology
 - Recycling, protection of resources and energy
 - Intercultural learning and one world learning
 - Education for sustainable development
- 2.1.3** In order to come up to the claim on education and self-development during the FÖJ, at least one assistant with professional and social competence needs to guide the participants.
- 2.1.4** The person, who is the professional or personal adviser, normally has to be contactable for the participants in order to answer their questions.
- 2.1.5** The responsible body offers provisions for the exchange of experiences and for the qualification of the staff and the contact persons of the employment locations and, if Necessary, informs about appropriate offers.
- 2.1.6** The responsible ensures that the educational requirement is fulfilled and the legal postulated neutrality at the job market is preserved. The employment location has to be able work properly independent from the amount of work the FÖJ participants put into the project.

2.2 Participation as centerpiece of the FÖJ: This means particularly that participants in the FÖJ are respected and engaged by the responsible bodies and their employment locations. It also means, that they can represent their interests and co-determine there.

2.2.1 The responsible body advises and supports the employment locations and the participants in the individual arrangement of the employment during their FÖJ. The responsible ensures that the participant is adequately engaged in the individual arrangement.

2.2.2 The responsible promotes processes of participation which are organized by oneself and associations of voluntaries (like the speakers of seminar groups, nationwide speakers)

3. Attendant education

3.1 attendant education as essential element of the FÖJ

- 3.1.1 The responsible body ensures that adequate laws, appointments and rules are known and followed.
- 3.1.2 The responsible ensures, that during the FÖJ there are at least 25 days of education in form of five educational seminars (5 days) visited by the participants.
- 3.1.3 The responsible ensures, that the voluntaries are allowed to participate in the assignment of the seminars.

3.2 The concept of the responsible as basis

- 3.2.1 The responsible ensures that the conceptual frame conditions of the attendant education exist in written form.
They are regularly rechecked and actualized appropriately to the number of participants and to the latest awareness of an education for sustainable development. The concept is geared to the pedagogic outline directive of the state and to the model of the education for sustainable development (BNE), whose concept of arrangement competence is central element of it.
- 3.2.2 The responsible ensures, that the contents and methods are geared to the aims of the educational concept and to the needs of the participants
- 3.2.3 The responsible body ensures, that the participants reflect on their employment in their employment location during the seminars and that they can exchange their experiences with other voluntaries.
- 3.2.4 The participants receive knowledge, the possibility to orient themselves and the possibility to make a change in the following areas: ecology, nature and environment protection, social and sociopolitical education and in the area of job orientation. Manifold methods initiate, support and enable different learn processes.

3.3 Qualified staff as guarantee of quality

- 3.3.1 The responsible body ensures that the full-time pedagogic staff, which works in the education sector, is professionally qualified in pedagogy and ecology.

- 3.3.2 The responsible body ensures, that additional or free-lance working trainers have an adequate qualification and that they are guided, attended and advised by full-time staff.
- 3.3.3 The responsible ensures, that the seminars are attended by at least two qualified persons (if possible a man and a woman) per seminar group.

3.4 Education for sustainable development: area ecology

- 3.4.1 The responsible ensures that a professionally founded basic knowledge and basic understanding for the protection of nature and environment is attained.
This means: general education in ecology; recognition, understanding and judging of ecological coherences, knowing percipience of ecological problems, linked thinking, understanding the interdisciplinary, integral connection of ecological problems and for possible solutions with undetermined results, understanding the model „sustainable development“.
- 3.4.2 The responsible body ensures that the participant's percipience for environment and nature is increased.
- 3.4.3 The responsible ensure, that projections and possibilities for acting environment friendly because of an environment friendly lifestyle are presented and tested.

3.5 Education for sustainable development: area self-development and social education

- 3.5.1 The responsible ensures, that the participants are supported adequately to their individual stage of development and that they attain adequate acting competence.
For this the consolidation of the following competences is important: self-confidence, creativity, personal responsibility, tolerance, to act and think social responsibly, the ability to work in a team, to communicate, to cooperate, to dissolve conflicts, to reflect, to take critic, to feel empathy and the ability to judge by oneself.
- 3.5.2 The responsible ensures, that the participants have the opportunity to grapple with their biographic and age specific requirements to act, which leads to autonomy.
- 3.5.3 The responsible ensures, that the participants can also design the seminars, that they can realistically gauge their own possibilities to learn and to act and that they are able to bear

responsibility. The part of the pedagogic staff is to attend and advise them.

3.6 Education for sustainable development: area sociopolitical learning and political education

- 3.6.1 The responsible ensures, that everyone acts democratically at the seminars and that common and different interests are said and discussed. Minorities are respected in the seminars.
- 3.6.2 The responsible enables a critical argument with the usual models, value orientation and thinking traditions and respects possible aim conflicts of acting sustainably.
- 3.6.3 The responsible ensures, that effects, possibilities and limits of the influence on society are shown and that the motivation to take on common responsibility for the society is supported.
- 3.6.4 The responsible ensures, that the issue of global and inter-generative justice as principle of sustainability is broached.

3.7 Gender Mainstreaming as orientation of the attendant education

- 3.7.1 The responsible body ensures, that the young men and women are treated equally during the seminars and that aspects of girl- and women policy respectively policy for Boys and men is respected at the choice of subjects.
- 3.7.2 The responsible ensures, that gender aspects are respected during the composition of seminar teams.
- 3.7.3 The responsible ensures, that gender adequate language is used.

3.8 All of the involved are informed about the education

Especially the contemporary and extensive allocation of the relevant information for the employment locations, the authorizing committee and for other involved People has to be ensured.

4. Mentoring, attendance and counsel of the participants and the employment locations by the pedagogic workers of the responsible

4.1 Personal attendance of the participants during the FÖJ- essential duty of the responsible

The equipment for the personal attendance of the participants is geared to a master plan. It includes elementary laws and arrangements of the attendance by the responsible inside and outside the seminars, as well as basic information about attending and caring at and by the employment locations. The elementary laws of pedagogic attendance also respect personnel administration and organization. This is ensured by a written field report at the end of the year and by personal conversations.

4.2 Adequate involvement of the participants in the arrangement of their employment

- 4.2.1** The responsible ensures, that the participants have the opportunity to plan and reflect their work in the employment locations individually with the responsible persons. Therefore the employment locations and participants make a plan about their work.
- 4.2.2** The responsible ensures, that everyone, who takes part in an FÖJ and every employment location has a pedagogic as a contact person, which can answer any question about the FÖJ And the work during it.
- 4.2.3** The responsible ensures that the participants can talk about personal questions, crisis and conflicts, if they want to. If necessary, they are sent to a specialist counseling.
- 4.2.4** The responsible ensures, that if there's an intended early cancelation, there's communication about the reasons for it, before it is executed. If necessary, there's an evaluation meeting between the responsible body and the FÖJ participant in question after the cancelation.
- 4.2.5** If the employment location cancels the FÖJ of a participant, the responsible body tries to evaluate in a conversation with said participant if there could be another solution, before the cancelation is executed. The responsible helps participants, who are still interested in an FÖJ and who are engaged enough after a cancelation, to find a new FÖJ employment location.

4.3 Possibilities of the participants to show their own interests

- 4.3.1 The communication between the professional workers of the responsible and the voluntaries is respectful and based on partnership
- 4.3.2 The responsible tries to arrange respectful way of communicating between representatives of the employment locations, the guider and the voluntaries.

5. Organization, coordination and information work of the responsible

5.1 The responsible organizes the whole process of the FÖJ

5.2 The responsible is service center for all players of the FÖJ

5.2.1 The responsible ensures, that there is a threefold contract before the employment starts. It has to be signed by the three contractual partners: the voluntary, the employment location and the responsible. The contract contains the relevant judicial terms of the FÖJ. If necessary it has to be actualized.

5.2.2 The responsible ensures, that the trainers of the FÖJ and, as the case may be, also administrative staff are contactable regularly in the office and/or that there is a proxy or an answering machine or mail system which can receive information.

5.2.3 The responsible ensures, that inquiries are dealt with soon after they are received.

5.2.4 The responsible ensures, that contracts and certificates will be sent as soon as possible.

5.2.5 The responsible advises the employment locations and the participants of legal terms, which are important for the FÖJ (for example employment protection, protection of minors, etc.) and sees to that they are adhered to.

5.2.6 The responsible ensures, that the contributions of the social insurance and the accident insurance for the participants, as well as the monthly payment of pocket money and the allocation of an accommodation and food are given to the participants.

5.2.7 The responsible ensures, that data of previous FÖJ age groups, which are sensible in the eyes of the JFDG, are deleted according to the legal terms unless the participant allows in a written document, that the data are saved for human relations, certificates, etc or there`s a legal bond to save them.

5.2.8 The responsible supports the employment locations by creating a qualified certification after the FÖJ.

6. Public Relations

6.1 Extensive information of the publicity

- 6.1.1** The responsible body informs the players in the sector of the protection of environment and nature; politics and youth work about the FÖJ and solicits it actively. While doing so he uses possibilities to Cooperate.
- 6.1.2** The responsible encourages the employment locations and the participants to do press relations and public relations and supports them by realizing it. He provides them with information and promotion material.
- 6.1.3** The civil commitment of the FÖJ participants is made public, regularly by the responsible, with help by the media (internet, newspapers, radio, and television).

6.2 Addressing of the target group which exists of adolescents and potential employment locations

- 6.2.1** The responsible ensures that every adolescent can get access to substantial information about the FÖJ.
- 6.2.2** The responsible provides potential employment locations with information material and advises appropriate institutions about chances and possibilities to become a FÖJ employment location.

6.3 Information work and public relations with potential decision-makers in mind

- 6.3.1** The responsible regularly informs the players, who are important for the FÖJ and for the society, about current developments.
- 6.3.2** The responsible advocates the standards for the voluntary services in political sector.

7. Integration, cooperation and collaboration

7.1 Common duties of the responsible bodies in the Bavarian funding body

Regular professional exchange, regular votes with the aim of constant high qualitative and quantitative standards, cross-association professional and political representation at the Department of the Environment, common public relations and a common application procedure.

7.2 Nationwide exchange between the responsible bodies

7.3 Common work of the responsible bodies in networks for environmental education/ education for sustainable development

7.4 Implementation of the criteria of the seal of quality „Umweltbildung Bayern“

7.5 Exchange with other voluntary services and across the limits of the responsible bodies own fields

7.6 Transfer of know-how of the responsible bodies in each organization

The responsible realizes his professional qualifications and experiences together with the ecological voluntary service inside the particular parent association. He works together with other specialist departments and institutions of his youth and adult organization.

8. Content and structural basics

- 8.1 **Criteria of sustainability- essential for internal organization**
- 8.2 **criteria of sustainability- essential for meetings and conferences**

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