

VOLUNTEER GUIDE 2026-2027



ABOUT NK SEEDS



Méliッサ Lansmant, a young 20-year-old Franco-Swiss traveler, founded the non-profit association NK Seeds in 2018 **to offer Lao children access to quality education through free English classes.**

NK stands for the village of **Nong Khiaw** in northern Laos, where the association's activities began. **SEEDS** represents the acronyms of **Solidarity, Education, Environment, Development, Support.**

Since 2022, NK SEEDS has expanded its mission by launching a student sponsorship program, helping Lao youth access school and professional opportunities. Simultaneously, the association launched clean water access projects in isolated villages, as well as medical outreach initiatives for vulnerable communities.



NK SEEDS IN NUMBERS

- 4 free English schools serving over 200 children
- 44 sponsored students
- 6 villages now have access to water
- 12 Lao employees and over 100 international volunteers
- 3 medical missions and over 6,000 people have received free medical care.

+6000

free medical care

+200

English students

+44

sponsored students

OUR MISSIONS & VALUES



Why Laos?

20% of children in Laos do not complete primary school.

This is because primary education is not mandatory and free. In addition, access to education remains limited in some remote areas due to challenges such as poverty, geographical remoteness, gender inequality, infrastructure problems and constant i and has t

Why English?

The Lao economy is mainly based on agriculture, mining, manufacturing and tourism. Agriculture remains the mainstay of the economy and employs a large proportion of the population, but tourism is a booming sector in Laos, attracting more and more international visitors each year. The international language is English.



ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



Why volunteer with NK SEEDS?

Volunteering is a human experience that lets you put your skills to good use in a multicultural associative context. Being a volunteer means to give the best of yourself in a spirit of openness and respect!

Help the Laotian team

The majority of the NK SEEDS team is Laotian as we think Lao people have an active role to play in the development of their own country. It's also the best way to ensure the long-term future of our programs and actions in favor of children.

However, you are welcome to put your skills to work for the association. We offer various missions in different fields for which a good level of English is always an imperative, as well as time staying with us.

Admission requirements

- Be over 18 years old
- To be Independent
- Fluent English (read, spoken and written)
- Good health
- Impeccable interpersonal skills
- Must be available for a period of time



ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



About Phou Jo English School

Phou Jo English School is a free English school located on Khong Island, the largest island in the Mekong River, at the heart of the 4000 islands (Si Phan Don). This project was created in partnership with NK SEEDS and Josef and Vanthika, a Franco-Lao retired couple who have chosen to dedicate this stage of their lives to educating children in Laos.

English classes are offered to local students five times a week, with around 60 students divided into 2 classes. The classes are taught by a local teacher, assisted by international volunteers. The program began on September 17, 2024.

Volunteers missions

Volunteers will participate in classes and assist the local English teacher five afternoons a week. In the mornings, volunteers are expected to independently prepare their English lessons, using the official curriculum as a guide. Although the head teacher, Davanh, will join them every day at 12:30 for a debrief and feedback session, he is unable to assist in the morning preparation due to his responsibilities as a public school teacher. Volunteers must, therefore, be self-sufficient in lesson planning. **The English classes take place from 3:45 PM to 5:30 PM, with two different classes during this time. Davanh will provide guidance and support to the volunteers.**

ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



Weekends

On weekends volunteers will be free to enjoy Muang Khong and the surrounding area (Don Det & Don Kon islands, Khon Phapheng Waterfall, Boat trip on the Mekong river...), and also enjoy the swimming pool at Kongmany Hotel.

Accommodation & food

Volunteers participating in the Phou Jo English School project in Muang Khong will be accommodated at Senesothxuen hotel or Kongmany Hotel, located on the banks of the Mekong River, just a 20 minute drive from the public school where they will teach.

Meals will be provided at the hotel. Volunteers will receive **breakfast and dinner each day of the week**. Lunch remains the responsibility of the volunteers. Water is included with meals, but other drinks such as soft drinks, shakes, cocktails, and beer will be at your own expense.

There are several little restaurants close to the college where volunteers can have lunch (noodle soup, fried rice...).

ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



Transportation

At Phou Jo English School, we provide one electric scooter for volunteers to commute between the hotel and the school. However, **please note that the school is a 20-minute motorbike ride away, so it is essential that volunteers are comfortable riding a scooter.** If volunteers are not at ease with riding an E-scooter, bicycles are available. Additionally, should volunteers wish to rent a motorbike for personal use, the rental costs will be their responsibility.

Fees

We kindly ask all volunteers to contribute a 30€ membership fee to join the NK SEEDS association.

A **week fee of 100€** will be required from the volunteers. This amount includes the services mentioned in the previous points. Volunteers will pay the fees for their stay directly to Siew, the coordinator or Pet, hotel director. Volunteers can pay in cash (LAK, USD, THB or EUR) or by credit card (3% surcharge). The exchange rate applied will be 1 euro = 23,000 kips. Ex : 2 weeks stay = 200 euros (4'800.000 kip)
(exchange rate is indicative and may vary according to official exchange variation.)

ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



Workspace and Teaching Materials

A workspace including a desk, Wi-Fi connection, and a computer will be provided at the Mekong House, located close to the school, for volunteers to prepare their English lessons. Teaching tools and a stock of paper, pens, and other supplies needed for the proper functioning of the school and the preparation of lessons are also available.

Additionally, a LOGBOOK is available for volunteers, Attendance, folders containing previous lesson materials to help with lesson planning and continuity are available in computer folders at the Mekong house. We highly recommend to read all available informations: CHECK THE COMPUTER FILES.

Here is the location of the Mekong House : [Click here](#)

ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



Supporting Teacher Davanh

Teacher Davanh is the main teacher, and volunteers are there solely to assist him. During the day, Davanh teaches at the public school and does not have time to prepare the lessons, so it will be up to the volunteers to plan activities based on the topic and his guidance.

Every day at noon, Davanh will meet with the volunteers to go over the afternoon lessons. Therefore, it is important that lesson preparation is done in the morning.

Davanh is quite shy, so it is essential to give him the space he needs to feel comfortable in his role as the lead teacher. Encouraging him and giving him compliments will help boost his confidence and create a better teaching environment for both him and the students.

ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



Sunday Arrival & Welcome by Teacher Davanh

On Sunday afternoon, upon arrival, Teacher Davanh will come to welcome the volunteers. He will take them on a short tour to visit the Mekong House and the school, giving them an introduction to their new environment. This will be a great opportunity to get familiar with the surroundings and ask any initial questions before starting the week.

Evening English Lessons with the Hotel Staff

If the hotel staff is available, a one-hour English lesson will be scheduled in the evening at the hotel. This is a great opportunity for them to improve their language skills, particularly for their work in the tourism industry. The lessons will be informal and adapted to their level and needs. Volunteers are encouraged to make these sessions interactive and practical, focusing on conversational English and useful vocabulary for their daily tasks.

A dedicated program based on Lao curriculum beginner program is available on the computer.

ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



Communication

Volunteers use WhatsApp to communicate with the Lao teacher and the hotel staff. A complete list of contacts will be provided to the volunteers.

ATM

There are several bank ATM close to the hotel but we recommend you to withdraw a sufficient amount of LAK during your stay in Pakse.

Wifi

Wifi is available at the hotel, at the Mekong House, but not at the school. We recommend buying a Lao SIM card (Unitel).

TIPS FOR VOLUNTEERS!



Teaching in Laos is an incredible experience, but it's important to understand and adapt to the local culture. Here are some key things to keep in mind:

Do's and don't in Lao PDR

https://share.google/ha4cOLvrg_QK1voo5f

1. Cultural Differences – Don't Misinterpret Behavior

Lao culture and education are different from what you might be used to. Some behaviors may seem unusual, but they are not signs of rudeness or disinterest. It's essential to observe, adapt, and avoid quick judgments.

2. Time & Flexibility – Go with the Flow

Schedules in Laos are more relaxed. It's common for people to arrive late or for plans to change last minute. Try not to get frustrated—things are just more laid-back here. The key is to stay flexible and go with the rhythm of local life.

3. Shyness – Building Trust Takes Time

Lao children are often very shy at first. They might avoid eye contact, step back when a volunteer approaches, or hesitate to speak. This is completely normal, and it takes time for them to feel comfortable. Be patient, smile often, and create a safe and encouraging environment for them.

4. Respect & Hierarchy in the Classroom

In Laos, teachers are highly respected, and students may not engage in the same way as in Western classrooms. They might be hesitant to ask questions or express opinions openly. Encourage participation gently without forcing them.



TIPS FOR VOLUNTEERS!



5. Teaching Style – Keep It Fun & Interactive

Many Lao students are used to rote learning (repeating and memorizing), so interactive methods like games, songs, and role-playing can make lessons more engaging. Visual aids and gestures also help since some students might have limited English vocabulary.

6. Non-Confrontation – Stay Calm & Positive

Lao culture values harmony, and direct confrontation is avoided. If an issue arises, address it calmly and respectfully rather than showing frustration or raising your voice. A gentle approach always works best.

7. Dress Modestly & Respectfully

Laos is a conservative country, especially in rural areas. Volunteers should dress modestly—covering shoulders and knees is recommended, especially when teaching.

8. Be Open to Learning

While you are there to teach, you will also learn a lot from your students and the local culture. Approach this experience with curiosity, humility, and an open mind.



ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



Arrival and departure days

The **arrival** day is **Sunday before 2pm**, and the departure day is Saturday.

The hotel managers, Davanh, our local teacher and Sonia, our local representative, will be informed in advance of the volunteer's arrival. Likewise, they will ensure the smooth departure of volunteers on Saturday.

How to get to Muang Khong

Coming from Bangkok, you can either fly, take a train or a long distance bus to Ubon Ratchathani. From there, you will need to take another bus to Pakse. We recommend paying your Lao visa with USD (~\$40 at the time of writing). Remember to bring a passport photo with you. **Please note that e-visas are not accepted for entry via land transport. Volunteers will apply for a tourist visa**

Pakse has different types of accomodation available. Two places that know about our association are Sanga Hostel and Residence Sisouk.

To travel from Pakse to Don Khong:

The trip is made by minibus, with Don Det usually as the final destination. Ask your hotel to arrange the ticket for you (approximately 250,000 kip). The minivan will pick you up at around 8:30 AM. The island is connected to the mainland by a bridge, and the minivan will drop you off at the intersection near the bridge.

Phet, the manager of Senesothxuen Hotel on Don Khong, will pick you up. It's important to message him beforehand with your estimated time of arrival (ETA) and a photo of your ticket. The journey takes approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes.

Phet : +856 20 55 353 949 (WhatsApp)

ABOUT VOLUNTEERING



Autonomy and Initiative: Key Requirements for Volunteers

One of the key requirements for volunteering with us is the ability to be autonomous. Muang Khong is a remote island with few tourists and limited activities. We need volunteers who can manage their free time independently and take initiative in planning and organizing lessons to best support the local teachers.

Insurance and Liability

Volunteers are fully responsible for obtaining insurance covering accidents, health, repatriation, and civil liability for the entire duration of their stay. In the event of an accident or medical issue, NK SEEDS and Kongmany Hotel decline all responsibility. Volunteers will communicate insurance policy number, telephone number and trusted person.

Respect for Rules and Conflicts

Volunteers commit to follow the instructions provided by Sonia, Phet and Davanh, as well as the NK SEEDS charter, which they will have signed before arriving on the island. In case of any breach of these rules, our local team reserves the right to ask one or more volunteers to leave the accommodation immediately, with no right to refund or compensation. NK SEEDS will support the family, the teacher and the hotel staff in their decision.

WEEKLY PLANNING



Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Location
07:00-09:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	<i>Hotel Kongmany</i>
10:30-12:00	Lesson preparations	Lesson preparations	Lesson preparations	Lesson preparations	Activities preparations + update the LOGBOOK	<i>Mekong House Mueng Sane</i>
12:00-12:30	Meeting with Lao Teacher	Meeting with Lao Teacher	Meeting with Lao Teacher	Meeting with Lao Teacher	Meeting with Lao Teacher	<i>Mekong House Mueng Sane</i>
12:30 – 15h30	Lunch / Free time	Lunch / Free time	Lunch / Free time	Lunch / Free time	Lunch / Free time	
15:30-17:30	English classes	English classes	English classes	English classes	English classes <i>sports/games Day Outdoor</i>	<i>Secondary school Mueng Sane</i>
18:30-19:00	English with hotel staff	English with hotel staff	English with hotel staff	English with hotel staff	English with hotel staff	<i>Hotel Kongmany (if staff available)</i>
19:00	Dinner with staff	Dinner with staff	Dinner with staff	Dinner with staff	Dinner with staff	<i>Hotel</i>

Time schedule is given as a guide and may vary.

Public holiday in Laos (no teaching during these days)

17 Oct: Ok Phansa (End of Buddhist Lent Day)

18 Oct : Lao Boat Racing Festival

2 Dec: Lao National Day

1 Jan: New Year's Day

10 Mar: Women's Day

14-18 Apr: Pii Mai Lao

1 May: Labour Day

2 June: Children's Day

School holidays

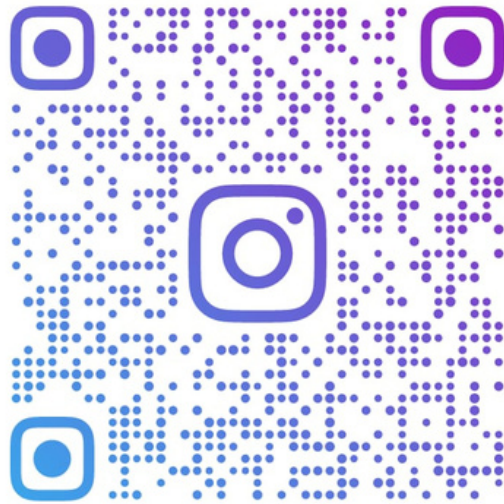
Due to the official school holidays, our school is closed in June, July and August.

CONTACTS



Director hotel Senesothxuen (accommodation)	PHET (LAO,ENG)	+856 20 55 353 949 (Whatsapp)
English Teacher	DAVANH (LAO,ENG)	+856 20 98 607 679 (WhatsApp)
Director Hotel Kongmany	SONIA (LAO,ENG)	+856 20 91 765 219 (WhatsApp)
local coordinator	SIEW (LAO,ENG)	+856 20 55 811 786 (WhatsApp)
NKSEEDS	TEE (LAO,ENG)	+856 20 52 835 981 (WhatsApp)
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