

Description of the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) Project Archaeological Park / Roman Museum in Xanten



At the center of the 51 Archaeological Park employees' work is research into the roman town of 'Colonia Ulpia Traiana' by excavation. The history is made visible, alive and comprehensible. The enormous town area is examined by an excavation team under the management of archaeologists. On the basis of the excavation results life size models will be built and original finds and foundations are shown in the ground. The model should help the 350,000 visitors who visit the APX annually imagine what the town was like.

Xanten is a small town on the 'Niederrhein' with a town Centre from the middle ages. There live approximately 20,000 people. Xanten is not far away from the Dutch border. Xanten has several things to offer due to the archaeological park, the regional museum and the historical town center. In the summer the town is often visited by tourists and is a nice destination for a weekend trip for those living in the nearby Ruhr district. The nearby 'Altrhein' has beautiful scenery and is also a well known bird protection area. Duisburg, Düsseldorf, Moers and Nijmegen in the Netherlands are easy to get to by train. The municipal district town Wesel is 17 km away. In Xanten there are adult education courses. A large part of the population works in small and medium sized businesses.



For 20 years every summer the archaeological park has offered an 'international



archaeological summer academy' for archaeology students from europe and overseas. All members of staff have always valued in particular the personal exchange with young people of non-German origins. Working together we have discovered differences and could also find many things in common. We would like to expand this experience and would therefore be very happy to work again together with an ESC volunteer. Through the situation in the Euregio Rhine-Waal a Europe growing together is an important matter for us and very topical.

The experiences we made with the European volunteer has been very well so far. Living together with other volunteers had many positive effects. They had a person for daily questions, somebody to cook with and spending together free time

The working field & tasks

The volunteer should get to know different areas of ground monument preservation and museum pedagogy.

They should work in the following areas in the course of the year. Work in the individual areas is divided into three to six week blocks. The individual areas will partly be worked in several times. The ESC volunteer will work together with the German volunteer. The volunteers in the archaeological park will be instructed by archaeologists and a member of the museum's educational staff.

1) Participation on the existing excavation (25%)

In order to give an idea of an excavation I include a description of a normal day. A small group meets in the morning (approx 5 people) and goes to the excavation equipped with spades and small trowels. It is necessary to be very careful and judicious so as not to destroy any findings. Many fragments are found in the ground and the findings are kept in large boxes and taken to the archive. The boxes must be very carefully labelled.

2) Working with findings (10%)

The box with the findings is later brought to the washing station. The findings are cleaned and can then be dated and labelled.

3) work in the restauration work shop (15%)

Metal objects found during excavation must be carefully cleaned in the restauration workshop. The volunteer can learn the special process (Eisenentsalzung). Findings are also preserved, such as a Roman oven.

4) Public Relation (designing brochures) and museum (20 %)

Materials for visitors to the archaeological park are regularly put together. Specific topics are explained e.g. how the roman heating system worked or what significance the bathing houses had in Roman everyday life. Together with the German volunteer, the ESC volunteer should work on the design of the brochure.

5) Participation on the international archaeological summer academy (15%)

6) Participation in the seminars of the Jugendbauhütte (Youth Building Hut) six weeks a year (15%)

7) The volunteer has also a right to 26 days holiday a year

Weekly plan restauration workshop and museum

The ESC volunteer works together with national volunteers and the person in charge of restauration. The person in charge is available to all volunteers to give advice and help.

Monday a.m.

The volunteer cleans some of the showcases and newly arranges them.

p.m.

some iron findings are taken from showcases to be put in the iron desalination machine in the restoration workshop

Tuesday a.m.

Labels must be produced for the showcases so that the iron findings that are currently in the restoration workshop can be described to the museum visitors. These labels must explain the objects in word and picture.

p.m.

carrying out research in the library on iron desalination.

Wednesday a.m.

The fragments of a small vessel are cleaned with a scalpel and brush and then stuck together.

p.m.

the iron objects in the museum should be recorded.

Thursday a.m.

The volunteers look for iron objects in need of restoration in the storeroom and pack them.

p.m.

The volunteers watch the restoration: the person in charge makes up a solution and the iron is subsequently placed in the iron desalination machine.

Moreover, we would like to involve the volunteer into our activity around the european heritage day which always takes place in September. This day is thought for the local community in order to get an insight into the work of our organization.

At this day we want the ESC volunteer to guide small groups through the area of excavations and explain how an excavation works. The volunteer will be supported by our colleague who is in charge for the educational part of the museum to prepare such a tour.

They will also prepare together other activities special for children and pupils around this day in order to mediate the topic of the day and the museum in general (the history of the romans in this area)

The volunteer should show curiosity and enjoyment in cultural heritage. They should also be willing to work outside as the excavations should involve a lot of outside work.

All facilities of the Landschaftsverband Rheinland are subjected to the current safety regulations for public facilities. All properties, buildings and excavationgrounds are regular certificated by an internal safety commission and the casualty federation of the community.

At the
always one
representative
for the
employees



excavations is
safety
who is responsible
safetyness of all
and volunteers.