

LYON - SHELTER CITY

**DEFEND, PROTECT ENVIRONMENTAL
DEFENDERS**

PILOT PROGRAMME





1. LYON - SHELTER CITY

In July 2021, the City of Lyon and the association "Agir ensemble pour les droits humains" (which translates into English as "Acting together on Human Rights") joined forces to build a programme called "Lyon : Shelter City for Environmental Defenders".

This programme aims to welcome to Lyon **defenders of environmental rights** who are exposed to danger because of their activism and/or who need a break outside their country of residence. It expresses the city's deep commitment to fundamental rights and freedoms and respect for international environmental law. The programme is also based on the expertise of **Agir ensemble pour les droits humains**, which in 1999 created the first French Emergency Fund dedicated to the protection of human rights defenders (HRDs) in 1999 and has since accompanied many individuals in their relocation to France.

Currently in a pilot phase, this new programme will be implemented in **November, 2021**.

1.1. TEMPORARY RELOCATION IN LYON

The programme offers a **temporary relocation of 3 to 9 months** for environmental defenders who are in danger in their country or who need a break outside to recharge their batteries.

This relocation would enable those who benefit from it to **continue their activism and engagement in France**. It would also offer them an opportunity to **strengthen their capacities**, their networks but also their knowledge and skills (by learning French, following university courses and conferences on specific topics), and to **make their struggle** by raising awareness among the population of Lyon.

1.2. LYON, A HUMANIST CITY BY TRADITION

Lyon is the **3rd largest city** in France with 519,000 inhabitants and the 2nd largest metropolis in France with over 1.6 million inhabitants.

The city is **easily accessible by many modes of transport** and is located **less than two hours by train from Paris and Geneva**. Lyon has a good public transport network that includes metros, tramways and buses. In addition, Lyon encourages and promotes cycling with 540km of cycle paths and 350 self-service bicycle stations.

Lyon has four universities offering numerous **training and meeting opportunities**. As the **capital of French gastronomy**, Lyon is also known for its intense cultural and sporting activities. Finally, as a "city of faith and revolt", Lyon is, by its history, very attached to humanitarian values.

2. ARRANGEMENTS FOR HOSTING THE DEFENDERS

2.1. SERVICES INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAMME

As part of their temporary relocation to Lyon, the defenders hosted will benefit from :

- **Administrative support** with the migration process (visa for relocations up to 3 or 6 months, residence permit for relocations of more than 6 months);
- **Access to university education** related to the themes of their activism (environment, humanitarian action, human rights, etc.) thanks to partnerships established with schools and universities;
- **Access to French courses** for non-French speaking HRDs ;
- **Free access to some cultural venues** managed by the municipality ;
- **Participation in events** organised by Agir ensemble pour les droits humains ;
- **Opportunity to raise awareness and communicate about their commitment** and to strengthen their network at the local level in Lyon ;
- **Opportunity to strengthen their network at national and international levels**, notably through participation in events taking place in Paris (up to two return trips to Paris during the relocation) ;

Agir ensemble pour les droits humains will, as the host organisation, **be available to listen to defenders throughout their relocation.**

2.2. MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The following costs will be fully covered:

- **Migration costs** (visa, residence permit, expenses related to the quick issuance of a passport), travel costs to Lyon and return to the country of origin;
- **Housing expenses:** the defender will be provided with a 73m² furnished apartment, located in the heart of the historic district of the city. The rent and costs related to water, electricity and gas are covered by the programme;
- **Living expenses** (food, communication, clothing...);
- **Local transport costs** (subscription to the TCL public transportation network) ;
- **National transport costs** (up to two round trips by TGV to Paris to participate in events and to strengthen the defender's network);
- **Medical and psychological expenses** during the stay, where applicable ;
- **Childcare and/or education expenses** in case of relocation with family.

3. HOW TO BENEFIT FROM THE PROGRAMME

3.1. WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM THE PROGRAMME

For this first pilot phase of the programme, **women environmental defenders will be given priority**. These HRD women can be accompanied, if necessary, by their children.

The City of Lyon has been committed to gender equality for more than 10 years and was awarded the "Diversity Label" in 2010 for its action against gender discrimination and for promoting women's rights. By joining this new programme, the city intends to broaden its commitment to gender equality and its support for women victims of violence internationally.

In addition, it is a fact that **environmental activists are currently the defenders who are the most at risk in the world**. By joining the programme "Lyon - Shelter City for Environmental Defenders", the municipality wishes to denounce this situation, especially as it has been led by an environmentalist mayor since 2020.

Defenders wishing to benefit from the programme must meet the following criteria:

- Be HRDs and be recognised as such by their local, national and/or international peers ;
- Be at risk OR in need of temporary relocation away from country of residence in order to benefit from a time of respite away from their work environment ;

- Not be subject to a judicial ban on leaving their country of origin ;
- Have a valid passport (6 months validity) or be willing to process it ;
- Demonstrate a willingness to return to their country of origin at the end of the relocation period ;
- Demonstrate a willingness to learn French (if not French speaking, except in the case of relocation of 3 months or less) ;
- Be able to hold a conversation in English, Spanish, Portuguese or German... (if not the potential benefactor cannot speak French) ;
- Demonstrate a willingness to communicate about their work and commitment, to raise awareness about their cause;
- Demonstrate a willingness to develop as a HRD (networks, skills, knowledge).

3.2. PROCEDURE

If you are interested in the programme, please request the form from urgence@aedh.org and send it back to us dully completed **before 7 October 2021**.

You would receive a response within 8 days. If you are shortlisted, you would be contacted for a meeting with "Agir ensemble" team in the following weeks.

The final decision would be given in October 2021 for a relocation starting in November.