

BERRIDGE

SUMMER AND GAP YEAR ARTS PROGRAMS

# Participant Handbook



ESSENTIAL FOR:  
Students



RESOURCE TYPE:  
Student Materials



REVIEW:  
Pre-Program

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For questions about this manual,  
please contact the Executive  
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Learn more:

[BERRIDGEPROGRAMS.COM](http://BERRIDGEPROGRAMS.COM)

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## **SECTION 1. Welcome**

A very warm welcome from all of us at Berridge Programs and the Creative Semester team! We are very excited to have you join us to be part of our creative community in Normandy, France. This handbook contains information you will find valuable both for your pre-program planning and while you are on the program. We ask that both parents and participants read this handbook carefully and reach out with any questions you may have.

### **Mission**

At Berridge Programs, our mission is to cultivate connection through creativity. We use creativity as a platform to enrich lives, foster meaningful cross-cultural relationships, and broaden global perspectives. We are committed to empowering individuals to embrace diversity, celebrate global culture, and thrive within a supportive community of fellow creatives.

### **Vision**

Our vision is to promote healthy interpersonal relationships and expand awareness of self and others through creative expression and cultural exploration. By empowering young artists to connect through the universal language of creativity, we inspire them to create a more compassionate and inclusive world.

### **Value Statements**

1. We value creativity as a powerful lens for understanding, appreciating, and celebrating diverse cultures.
2. We champion the profound capacity of art to foster human connections, stimulate meaningful dialogue, and illuminate fresh perspectives.
3. We place collaboration at the center of creative practice, crafting work in the spirit of community.
4. We uphold the innate value of art, highlighting its creation and appreciation for its own sake, unrestricted by commercial considerations.
5. We build sustainable creative practices, striving to minimize our impact on crucial resources such as water, energy, plant, and animal life

### **Executive Director**

Andrea Mardon

[andrea@berridgeprograms.com](mailto:andrea@berridgeprograms.com)

Phone: +1 (760) 688-8447

### **Program Director**

Cage Pierre, Program Director

Amber Montgomery, Program Director

(Contact details shared 2 weeks before the program)

## **Faculty & Staff**

Cage Pierre, Program Director, Acting

Amber Montgomery, Program Director, Acting

Adam Du Preez, Studio Art

Laurens Boersma, Studio Art

RJ Root, Guitar/Instrumental Music, Music Production (Weeks 1-3)

Shauna Medinah, Vocal Music, Music Production (Weeks 5-9)

Simon Purse, Filmmaking/Acting

Bogdan Silaghi, Head Chef

Andrea Mardon, Executive Director, will be onsite week 1 and again weeks 6-9

Emily Calcara, Travel Coordinator, will be onsite for the Paris trip and week 5-9

## **SECTION 2. Essential Eligibility Criteria**

All applicants must meet the following essential eligibility criteria to be considered for admission on to our programs:

- Participants must be between the age of 18-22, in some programs we can accept applicants who are 17.
- Participants must be of good academic standing at any school they have attended and not have been subject to disciplinary action, suspension, dismissal or expulsion from a secondary and/or post-secondary institution.
- Participants must be choosing willingly and freely to participate on the program and not be required/counselled to join the program by a parent, guardian, doctor, therapist or court mandate
- Participants must have a good level of English language proficiency as all our programs are taught in English.
- Participants must be open-minded and tolerant of the views and opinions of others.
- Participants must be willing to follow the policies and procedures of the program.
- Participants must be able to travel independently from their home city to the designated airport of the program start without assistance from our staff.
- Participants must have the ability to work and create both independently and collaborate willingly within a group.
- Participants must be able to self-medicate without the aid of assistance.
- Participants must be prepared to participate in and engage fully with the program which includes attending all group excursions, outings, and workshops.
- Participants must be willing and able to be up and on time each day for all classes, excursions and activities and not need assistance from staff to wake up, be on time and/or manage their sleeping hours to ensure that they are on time each day.

- Participants must be prepared for experiential learning in a variety of weather conditions including rain and cool weather.
- Participants must be willing and able to be independent of program staff, particularly on field trip days where they will be encouraged to spend time exploring in small groups.
- Participants must be willing and able to contribute to the running of our community which may include helping in the kitchen, maintaining our household and other day-to-day community tasks.
- Participants must be willing to fully disclose all physical and mental health conditions on their registration forms.
- Participants must be in sound physical and mental condition to attend the program and must not require any ongoing medical, mental or therapeutic treatment from an on the ground health professional while on the program.
- Participants must be willing and able to ask for support and guidance when needed and be able to articulate and advocate for their own needs.
- Participants must not have completed in-patient treatment for substance abuse, suicidal attempts or ideations and/or serious mental health conditions within the last 12 months.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Our program is not a therapeutic program and we have no therapist or psychologist on-site or on-call. It is therefore not an appropriate program for participants needing regular, in-person therapy, participants who have serious psychological conditions or participants whose mental health may be in jeopardy with a sudden change of routine, environment or the added stressors of travel away from home.

### **SECTION 3. Participant Code of Conduct**

The Participant Code of Conduct holds participants on our programs to a high standard to protect our community, promote consideration and respect for individuals and support the aims of the program.

1. Participants must show courtesy and respect to everyone they encounter at all times. Participants must be respectful of other participants and staff, be conscious and accepting of differences and patient with the opinions and needs of others.
2. Participants must strive to create an environment that is inclusive for all groups—including but not limited to groups defined by race, class, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic background—in order to foster a diverse educational community with a wealth of perspectives and experiences.
3. Participants must uphold high standards of creative/academic integrity. Participants should demonstrate a spirit of cooperation and exploration and to meet the intellectual challenges of the program through honest and hard work. Participants must refrain from all forms of dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, supplying false information, or forgery.

4. Participants must respect property associated with the program. Participants will not borrow, use or disturb items belonging to other participants, staff, Berridge Programs or others without clear prior permission. Participants must show respect for and take reasonable care of our residence, other facilities and equipment and furnishings. Participants must not engage in any unauthorized entry, use or occupation of facilities not for use by our participants.
5. Participants must know and follow all policies and procedures listed in the Participant Handbook, as well as the policies presented by Berridge Programs staff and those in positions of authority.

**Conduct leading to immediate dismissal from the program:**

1. Participants must not commit acts of violence on persons or property or threaten to commit any acts of violence.
2. Participants must not engage in any form of sexual harassment in person or online. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome verbal or physical behavior towards another person. Some examples of sexual harassment include unwelcome or inappropriate touching, threatening or engaging in adverse action after someone refuses a sexual advance, making lewd or sexual comments about an individual's appearance, displaying pornographic images on computers, emails, mobile phones, etc, or making sexist remarks or derogatory comments.
3. Participants must not possess or distribute illegal drugs. This includes cannabis products. Participation in an incident involving drugs is cause for an immediate dismissal, even if the participant did not consume or intend to consume these substances. Possession, sale or use of illegal drugs are classified as criminal offences in France and may result in prosecution.

**Conduct leading to disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the program:**

1. Participants must not use, take part in or facilitate discriminatory language of any kind, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on gender, gender identity, race, national origin, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, handicap, or intelligence.
2. Participants must not engage in any form of harassment or bullying in person or online. Harassment consists of conduct of any type (including, but not limited to, written, verbal, graphic or physical conduct) which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance, or which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning, residential or working environment.
3. Participants must not possess or consume any alcohol in any of our residences at any time. Alcohol found in residence will be confiscated and repeat violations will result in dismissal from the program.
4. Participants must not tamper with or misuse fire alarms, firefighting equipment or safety equipment.

5. Participants must not engage in romantic or sexual relationships with faculty/staff members.
6. Participants must not sell, purchase, produce or possess for use any weapons, explosives, fireworks or incendiary devices, even if these items are considered decorative and/or not intended for use.
7. Participants must not possess cigarettes, tobacco, legalized cannabis products and/or smoke or vape these products anywhere in and around the residence or on campus grounds. Cigarettes, vaping devices, tobacco and legalized cannabis products found in residence or in possession will be confiscated and repeated violations may result in program dismissal.

### **Alcohol Consumption Policies**

Participants are asked to pay special attention to our policies around alcohol consumption.

The legal drinking age is 18 in France. Participants may consume alcohol on field trips and dinner out nights within the following guidelines and limitations:

1. Participants under the age of 18 may not consume alcohol at any time and doing so will result in immediate dismissal from the program with no refund of fees.
2. Participants who are intoxicated to the point of slurring speech, falling down, needing to be carried or being sick will be immediately dismissed from the program with no refund of fees.
3. A two drink limit is an appropriate guideline for all participants on any meal out, field trip or other activity where alcohol is available.
4. It is not appropriate at a restaurant in France to order hard liquor drinks throughout dinner. The custom is to order an aperitif followed by a glass of cider, beer or wine. Participants are asked to observe this custom.
5. Alcohol may not be purchased on our trips to the supermarket, even if it is not intended for consumption by the participant i.e./purchased as a souvenir or for family members.
6. Carrying open bottles of liquor anywhere at any time is not allowed, regardless of French law.
7. Consumption in public spaces is not allowed anywhere at any time, regardless of French law.
8. Participants are asked to refrain from openly discussing habits or intentions around drinking in front of other participants and staff. This would include bragging about drinking, pressuring other participants to drink and/or making drinking a focus or priority. Vocalizing your habits and intentions around alcohol can make other program participants uncomfortable and may prompt a discussion with the Program Director.

### **Reserved Rights of the Program**

1. The program reserves the right to enter or inspect any room when, at the discretion of the Program Director, it is deemed necessary for the security or



maintenance of the residence or safety of the residents. This includes the right to inspect rooms for compliance with regulations regarding drug, alcohol, smoking, weapons and fire hazards.

2. The program reserves the right to inspect personal belongings including suitcases, backpacks, purses etc when, at the discretion of the Program Director, it is deemed necessary for the security or maintenance of the residence or safety of the residents. This includes the right to inspect belongings for compliance with regulations regarding drugs, alcohol, smoking, weapons and fire hazards.
3. The program reserves the right to take disciplinary action around participant behaviors deemed, at the discretion of the Program Director, as anti-social, unacceptable or dangerous either to the participant themselves or a member of the community. This may include the impositions of certain conditions for continuing residence or dismissal from the program at the discretion of the Program Director.
4. The program reserves the right to dismiss a participant whose physical or psychological health status demands, or comes to demand, more care than can be provided by the program.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Violation of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary actions as outlined. These actions provide an opportunity to work with the participant to understand and modify behaviors that may be causing difficulties for them and the community, allowing them to continue in the program. Disciplinary measures can include routine inspections of rooms and personal belongings, the imposition of a restrictive curfew, making apologies or reparations to faculty, staff, or other participants, participation in conflict mediation, and the creation of written agreements or plans of action for ongoing participation in the program. Repeated violations of the Code of Conduct will result in dismissal from the program, as determined by the discretion of the Program Director.

### **Dismissal**

Dismissal from the program is a challenging and emotional decision, made only when a serious Code of Conduct violation has occurred or when necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the community. It is a regrettable action, reflecting the seriousness of the participant's conduct. Dismissal from the program is immediate and a dismissed participant will be expected to leave campus within 2 hours of dismissal. Reasons for dismissal will be given in writing both to the participant and parent. Arrangements for travel and overnight accommodation, if necessary, will be made by program staff. Please note all expenses associated with dismissal of a participant are the responsibility of the participant and his/her family. This may include travel costs, overnight accommodation, costs for a staff/faculty member to accompany the student and change fees for flights. No program fees will be refunded in the event of a dismissal. Dismissal of a participant and the reasons for dismissal may be shared with faculty, staff and other participants at the discretion of

the Program Director if deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of the community.

### **Leaving the Program Early**

Participants may choose to leave the program early for any reason at any time. Participants who elect to leave the program early should be prepared to travel to Paris CDG airport independently without being accompanied by a member of staff. Our staff can assist with getting a participant to the local train station for their journey into Paris and make hotel and onward travel suggestions but all travel arrangements for train tickets, hotels, flight changes and taxis must be made by the participant or parent/guardian.

### **Dismissal at the Discretion of the Program Director**

If a participant's needs become more than the program can accommodate, a decision may be made for that participant to leave the program early. Some reasons for this may be ongoing severe homesickness, ongoing issues with other participants, chronic lateness or non-participation, increased isolation, ongoing anxiety/depression, repeated difficult behaviors in class or in residence with other participants or any situation that makes the program untenable for a participant and demands an amount of time, attention or care that is more than the program can provide. This early departure decision is at the discretion of the Program Director and, although we prefer these decisions to be mutual, it may be made without the agreement of the participant or parent/guardian. If a participant is asked to leave the program early, the dismissal protocol outlined above will apply including no refund of fees.

### **Acknowledgement**

Participants are asked to acknowledge that they have read and understand all Eligibility Criteria, Code of Conduct and Reserved Rights of the Program and that they agree to abide by all of these policies and procedures for the duration of the program. This includes your understanding that all costs associated with participant removal from the program are paid by the parent/guardian with no refund of fees at any time. Questions or concerns about these policies should be addressed with the Program Director before the start date of the program.

## **SECTION 4. Pre-Departure Information**

### **Preparing for the Program**

Preparing for time abroad involves both mental and practical readiness, essential for managing emotions, expectations, easing culture shock and helping you make a smooth transition into program life. Some suggestions for preparing for the program include:

- Thoroughly read the program's description on the website to insure you understand the experience completely

- Carefully review the Participant Handbook and ask your parents to do the same.
- Begin planning your travel, phone service, medical insurance etc as early as possible.
- Research and read about France, focusing on the region where the program is located.
- Learn a few basic French phrases online.
- Talk to friends who have done gap year or study abroad programs for tips on coping with homesickness, living in a community and other potential challenges.
- Reach out to Berridge staff with any questions you may have

We encourage participants and parents to begin an open dialogue around potential challenges they may face on the program, particularly in relation to homesickness, mental health, interpersonal relationships and independent living, and reach out to Berridge Programs staff to discuss coping strategies or ways to prepare.

### **Program Dates**

Program start and end dates can be found in your Acceptance Letter sent with your acceptance email. Please note that the program starts officially at 10AM on arrival day and ends at 12 noon on departure day. If you are travelling before or after our program start dates, those are the times which are staff responsibilities will begin and end.

### **Flights/Passports**

Please book your flights at least six weeks before the program start date. Although this seems like quite a few weeks before, it's very helpful for our advanced planning. In addition to filling out your arrival and departure details on the online travel form, please forward us a copy of your actual itinerary as soon as you have booked. Please open your passport today and make sure it does not expire for at least three months **after** your departure from France. The Immigration authorities at the airport can refuse you entry for that reason alone. United States, Canadian and EU citizens do NOT need a visa in order to enter the country but participants from other countries should check with their home country.

### **Prescription Medication Policies**

The following Medication Policy helps to manage and monitor the use of prescription medications, ensuring they are used properly and only by the individuals for whom they are prescribed. This prevents misuse and potential health risks, such as adverse reactions or overdoses. Additionally, the policy ensures that staff are informed about participants' medical needs, enabling them to provide appropriate care and respond effectively in case of an emergency.

Please read the following policies around prescription medications carefully. You will be asked to acknowledge that you have read and understood these policies when you sign your Medical Forms.

With regards to prescription medications, it is the policy of Berridge Programs that:

1. Participants will indicate all prescription medications on their health forms. Failure to disclose a prescription medication may result in dismissal from the program.
2. Participants will keep medication in the original, pharmacy-issued bottles with the patient's name, drug name and directions for use clearly labelled in English on the outside. This is a requirement both of our program and the law of the countries in which we operate.
3. Participants bring sufficient prescription medications for the entire duration of their program.
4. Participants will not discontinue any prescription medication immediately before or during a program unless under specific instruction and care from their family physician.
5. Participants will administer their medications as directed by their physician without the need of assistance from any program staff. This includes not forgetting to take medications or needing to be reminded to take any medications. Berridge Programs assumes no responsibility for administering any medications and shall not be liable for any consequences that may arise as a result of participants administering or failing to administer medications.
6. If a participant forgets to take a medication, they will take it immediately upon remembering unless instructed otherwise by their physician. If a missed dose has side effects as indicated on your forms, please report immediately to the Program Director that you have missed your medication.
7. Participants will keep their medications completely secure with their own belongings. The Program Director or program staff cannot be responsible for holding or storing any prescription medications for any participant. Berridge Programs assumes no responsibility for securing any medications and shall not be liable for any consequences that may arise as a result of participants securing, or failing to secure medications.
8. Participants will not offer their prescription medications to any other participant under any circumstances. Offering your prescription medications to another participant for any reason will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

### **Lost/Stolen Medication**

If your medication is lost/stolen in transit or during travel on the program, every effort will be made by the program director to secure an additional prescription or have your medication sent to you from your home country (if the laws of the country you are travelling in allow this). If this cannot be done, the participant may be dismissed from the program if it is determined by the Program Director, our Medical

Advisory Team and/or the participant's physician that they cannot continue on the program for health reasons.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Psychotropic medications (Anxiety, Depression, ADHD) are controlled substances in the countries we operate and you will need a note from your doctor confirming that this medication is for you, the condition it is prescribed for and the dosage required each day in order to bring more than a one month's supply into the country.

### **Medical and Trip Insurance**

It is strongly recommended that every participant have overseas medical insurance in place before they come to France. Please check with your current health insurance provider, some cover you overseas and some do not. Make sure that the limits, coverages, and deductibles are within your comfort levels. Many US providers DO NOT cover Emergency Medical Evacuation which is essential for overseas travel. It is strongly recommended that you have Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$250,000 USD.

We recommend that you travel with details of your coverage limits as well as phone numbers to contact overseas in case you need your medical coverage.

If you need to purchase additional coverage, there are many online providers who can facilitate this such as [www.insuremytrip.com](http://www.insuremytrip.com). It is not cost prohibitive to purchase additional insurance and again, we strongly recommend that you are fully covered for your entire time in France.

Please note that Berridge Programs cannot give advice on medical insurance coverage or providers, it is up to each family to secure their own overseas medical coverage and make sure that they are comfortable with the limits, deductibles, and coverages for their individual policies.

In addition, we strongly encourage all participants to consider insuring the entire amount of their trip, including their tuition and flights in the event of trip interruption and/or medical emergency.

### **Medical/Dietary/Travel Forms**

You will need to fill out Medical, Dietary and Travel Information forms at least 6 weeks before arrival on the program. These forms are all online and a link will be sent to you before your program start date. Please be accurate and truthful on these forms as they will be instrumental in preparing on how to best support you during your time in France.

### **STEP Traveller Program**

We ask all participants coming from the US to enroll in the Smart Traveller Enrolment Program offered by the US Department of State. The Smart Traveler Enrolment Program (STEP) is a free service for U.S. citizens abroad to register their trip with the

nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. It provides safety updates, helps the Embassy contact you in emergencies, and aids family and friends in reaching you during a potential crisis. You can register at [www. step.state.gov](http://www.step.state.gov)

Participants coming from other countries should research similar programs offered by their country or consular services.

### **Money in France**

You should arrange a minimum of two functional cards **in the participant's name** that provide access to debit, credit and cash. Credit cards may only function with a "chip and pin" system in Europe, not by swiping, so be prepared not to be able to use strict credit everywhere. Know your pin numbers and keep them separate from your cards at all times.

**IMPORTANT:** Alert your bank that you are travelling in France and give them your dates. Many banks will disable cards being used in foreign places as a security measure.

### **Identification**

Please bring with you another form of picture identification other than your passport. A driver's license, ID card, participant card will suffice. You will be expected to keep your passport safe while you are in France and are asked not to carry your passport on your person during field trips. (Losing your passport overseas is a huge inconvenience!) It is French law that everyone carries a photo ID on them at all times and you may be asked for it when using your credit cards.

Do not bring:

- More cash on your person than you would be prepared to lose
- An American Express card as they are almost universally not accepted in France
- Travellers Cheques
- Apple Pay/Pay is available in some places but not all

### **Budgeting Guidelines**

What is included in the program tuition:

- All transportation during the program.
- All residential costs including Paris hostel.
- All activities, entrance fees, tour guide fees
- All equipment for taught classes/workshops (except Studio Art -please see below)
- All breakfasts
- Lunch 5 days per week.
- Dinners 6 days per week

What is NOT included in the program tuition:

- Round trip airfare to Paris CDG and train travel to and from the program
- Lunch 2 days per week (On full and/or half field trip day. Budget 10-25 euros/meal)
- Dinner out once per week (Budget 25-40 euros)
- Materials for any personal projects outside of taught classes/workshops
- Studio Art Essential Supplies Kit

Paris Trip – A more detailed breakdown of what is covered on the Paris trip and what you will need to budget for will be emailed to you 4 weeks before the program start date.

### **Arrival Day**

Please refer to your Acceptance Packet for the options and full details of how to travel to the program. If you are using the staff meet and greet, please let us know as soon as possible.

Contact Numbers: Contact numbers for all staff who will be at the train station on arrival day will be emailed to all participants and parents 2 weeks before the program start date. In addition, our WhatsApp group for the program will be created 2 weeks before the program and can also be used as a method of communication on arrival day.

### **Pre-Departure Checklist**

- ✓ Online forms filled out
- ✓ Copy of actual flight itinerary sent to Program Director
- ✓ Check luggage weight allowances with airline
- ✓ Have enough prescription medications to last 12 weeks
- ✓ Make a photocopy of your passport and give it to your parents
- ✓ Make sure your phone will have functional service in France
- ✓ Arrange credit card/access to cash that will work overseas
- ✓ Have another form of Photo ID other than passport

Have on your person and/or in your carry-on:

- Contact numbers for Berridge staff (Printed copy)
- Phone that has service in France including data (not just Wi-Fi)
- Phone charger
- Printed copy of your plane ticket
- Wallet and some cash (euros or other)
- Passport
- Another Photo ID
- Laptop (not recommended to put in your checked luggage)

## **Packing List**

Luggage and Luggage Limits: Participants are asked to limit their luggage to one personal item (laptop, backpack) , one carry-on suitcase and one bag weighing no more than 50lbs/22kgs OR whatever they can manage personally. You will be responsible for moving your luggage and must be able to lift your suitcase(s) with no assistance. The rooms in our residence do not have an abundance of storage space so you are asked to keep within these limits.

Paris Trip: **We will be travelling by train to Paris, and you will be limited to one carry on size ROLLING suitcase and one backpack ONLY.** You must be able to handle and lift all of your own luggage on the train and the Paris metro to our residence. You will not be allowed to bring a large suitcase so please make arrangements to bring appropriate luggage that you can handle yourself. For security, laptops will not be allowed or required on the Paris trip.

## **Weather in Normandy**

Oct – Dec: Fall in Normandy is variable, and temperatures will start out in the high 60's and move towards the low 40's. It rarely snows in Normandy, but it can rain quite a bit. We usually experience 50/50 of sunny and rainy days. Please be aware that the days will be getting considerably shorter as we move towards Dec with the sun setting at 5PM after daylight savings change.

Jan – April: Expect temperatures ranging from freezing to mid-60's towards springtime. Although it almost never snows in Normandy and winters are milder than most participants are used to, it can be very wet and feel colder than you expect because of the dampness.

Essential:

- Warm sweaters, sweatshirts etc
- Comfortable, loose and warm clothing for indoors
- Indoor house shoes/slippers
- Waterproof winter coat
- Hat, gloves, scarf
- Waterproof rain jacket
- Waterproof boots and/or shoes (Hiking boot, duckboot or similar)
- Warm socks
- Sneakers/Trainers (ideally not white! There can be a lot of mud around!)

Please also bring:

- **Water bottle with your name on it**
- Blank journal and/or notebook, pens and pencils
- Toiletries (full sizes can be bought in the first week)
- Simple, white, US – France plug converters for phone chargers/laptops
- Headphones



- A supply of basic over the counter medications (Tylenol, Advil, cold medication etc)
- Any prescription medications for the duration of your stay
- Shower Carry kit (Bathrooms are down the hall for most rooms)

**PLEASE NOTE:** All prescription medications must be in the original, pharmacy-issued bottles with the patient's name, drug name and directions for use clearly labelled in English on the outside. Please review the Medications Policy found on the online forms packet.

There will be a shuttle to Auchan (similar to a Walmart) starting the first weekend where you can buy any other toiletries you need or additional items too big to pack such as a bathrobe, extra towel or slippers.

We will supply:

- All bedding, sheets and pillows
- Towel
- Hair dryers compatible with French sockets
- Flat irons or curling irons if needed
- Iron and Ironing board

Do Not Bring:

- US hair dryers, curling irons or straightening irons
- US clothes irons including travel irons
- Vaping devices, alcohol, tobacco or any illegal or controlled substances
- Large amounts of cash (a general guideline is over 500 euros)
- Multi-country plug converters (use simple, white plug converters only)

Acting Concentration

- Loose/comfortable/stretchy clothing (dance gear, yoga pants, sweatpants, etc)
- Dance shoes (if you have them)
- Socks you can get dirty
- Black pants, black t-shirt, black leggings or yoga pants

Film Concentration

Please bring a laptop with either Adobe Suite installed (Student versions are available for reasonable cost) and a SOLID STATE external hard drive (1TB is sufficient), not just an external hard drive but an SSD please. This is for dumping and storing your film footage and finished films.

Studio Art Concentration

Studio Artists will need to purchase all their art supplies either before coming to France or on arrival. A recommended art supplies list will be sent to you 6 weeks

before the program start date. You can either bring these supplies with you to France or purchase them at our local art supply store in the first week of the program. The estimated cost of the supplies list is between \$300-500 USD.

### Music Concentration

We have a decent full size digital piano on site and two guitars for use. It is recommended that you bring your own guitar if you have it as most musicians are more comfortable with their own instrument.

## SECTION 5. Residence Information

### Château Le Mont Epinguet - Campus Information

Château le Mont Epinguet is an 18<sup>th</sup> century chateau located about 20 minutes from the city of Cherbourg (pop. 35,000). Restored by the Berridge family in 1991, the chateau is a unique historical residence and the creative heart of our program. The chateau is located in an idyllic countryside setting that feels remote but is only a few miles away from all essential services.

The chateau is located at the following address:

Château le Mont Epinguet  
97 Rue du Mont Epinguet  
50700 Brix  
FRANCE

**Buildings:** There are three residential buildings onsite: the Chateau, the Mews house and the Carriage house. Gap year participants will be housed in Mews and Carriage houses and classes are held in the Chateau. The Mews and Carriage house provides an independent living experience for our participants where they can prepare their own breakfasts and socialize with their peers independent of the program staff.

**Bedrooms/Bathrooms:** Participants are roomed in doubles or triples with most rooms sharing a bathroom in the hallway between 4-6 participants. Bathrooms are single occupancy. Beds are a mixture of single and double beds. **Please note there are no single rooms on our program.** Sheets, blankets, pillows and towels are provided.

**Kitchen Access:** Both the Mews and Carriage house come with a fully equipped kitchen that students have access to. Breakfast is prepared independently by program participants in their home kitchens. (See Meals below)

**Studio Spaces:** The main rooms of the chateau will be converted into creative studios for workshops, classes and participant use. This includes Writers Room/Editing Suite, Acting Studio, Painting Studio and Music Studio. Participants

are asked to respect the scheduling of these rooms and to keep these rooms clean and free of clutter. Please note that studios in the chateau close at 9 PM and students must be in their own residence at this time.

Grounds: The chateau is surrounded by 5 acres of lawns, gardens and woods which students are welcome to enjoy. We have exclusive use of the entire chateau and grounds for the duration of the program.

Rooming Assignments: The forms packet contains a section for you to indicate your living habits and rooming preference. Our options for rooming are:

- Female
- Male
- Gender Inclusive

Gender Inclusive Housing is when two or more students share a bedroom regardless of their gender identity, gender expression, or gender assigned at birth.

This option may be appealing to:

- Students in the process of discovering their gender identity.
- Students who do not wish to identify themselves by gender.
- Allies of LGBTQIA+, gender and sexual diverse communities.
- Students who feel more comfortable with a roommate of a different gender.

Gender inclusive housing is not appropriate for:

- Couples or students who are in a romantic relationship with each other.
- Students who are not committed to gender equity and inclusion or are very new or uncertain of their commitment to these values.

Berridge Programs offers Gender Inclusive rooms in each house. Students can choose this option

## **Meals**

All food is provided for on the program with the exception of our lunches and dinner out days. Breakfast is self-catered and lunch and dinner are fully catered 5 times per week.

Breakfast: Participant residence kitchens are stocked with basic breakfast items such as cereals, milk, bread, spreads, fruit, tea and coffee. Breakfast is self-catered and program staff will re-stock items as needed.

Lunch: Lunch is prepared by our in-house chef and will offer a variety of sandwiches, soups, salads and hot entrees served buffet style.

Dinners: Our in-house chef prepares a hot, sit-down meal 5 nights per week. This is served as a group in the chateau dining hall and staff and students dine together. We will explore classic French dishes as well as offer international dishes (Thai and Indian curries, English roast dinners) and some good American comfort food as well. One night per week we have a dinner out and one night per week participants organize, shop for and cook a group meal.

Special Diets: We can accommodate vegetarian, dairy-free and gluten-free diets. Please indicate your preferences on your dietary form. If you have a life-threatening allergy (i.e., gluten or nuts) please contact us immediately to discuss your needs and make sure that we can accommodate you.

Purchasing Other/Personal Food: Any additional foods outside of what we provide including snack foods and sodas, can be purchased by program participants on our weekly Sunday morning grocery store shuttle.

### **Laundry**

There are washing machines in both houses but no dryers. You will need to hang your laundry to dry on drying racks provided or outside on the clothes lines.

### **Leaving the Chateau Grounds**

Participants may leave the grounds during daylight hours to walk/exercise in the local area. A separate "Check In/Check Out" Whats App group is formed with all participants, Program Director and Associate Director and participants are asked to check in and out on the thread when they leave and return.

Ours is a community, residential experience and, as such, participants are asked not to leave the program grounds overnight at any time, for any reason.

### **Wi-Fi**

All residences have Wi-Fi for students to use however, please note that it is not fibre optic and therefore not fast. You will be able to text, use Wi-Fi calling and video chat with no problem but you will not be able to stream any media during your time with us. Please make sure that any media is downloaded to your laptop prior to arrival on the program.

### **Housekeeping/Residential Duties**

Participants are responsible for daily household and kitchen duties such helping with meal prep, keeping the breakfast area clean and stocked, helping with dinner service and dishes. Household duties include vacuuming of studio spaces, emptying trash/recycling and other light cleaning. A cleaner will come to both residences on Saturdays to clean all of the bathrooms and kitchen.

Participants are expected to maintain cleanliness in the houses at all times. The Program Director will inspect bedrooms on a regular basis to ensure that rooms are free of trash, clutter and that nothing constitutes a fire hazard. **Please note that none of the rooms in our residences are locked.** Participants will be responsible for the safety and security of their own belongings.

### **Mail/Packages**

Letters reach us fairly easily. Packages are more difficult and delivery times vary. FedEx and UPS should be avoided unless it is an emergency (i.e., medication) This is because both carry taxes and duty charges into France which need to be paid on receipt and are often more than the value of the package. Amazon.fr will deliver to our residence with relative reliability although often not the next day.

### **Guests**

For reasons of safety and security, there are no unauthorized outside guests allowed within our program grounds at any time. There are no overnight guests allowed, including family members and friends. A list of accommodation nearby can be provided for visitors.

### **Emergency Contacts**

Emergency contacts for fire, police and ambulance can be found on the back of each bedroom door and on laminated cards throughout the residence. Cell phone numbers of staff will be distributed by email 3 weeks before arrival day to all participants and parents.

## **SECTION 6. Paris Trip**

### **Maisons Internationales de la Jeunesse (MIJE) - Campus Information**

Our residence in Paris is located at:

MIJE Paris  
6 rue de Fourcy  
75004 PARIS

Bedrooms/Bathrooms: Bedrooms are dormitory style shared between 4-6 students with a bathroom in the hallway.

### **Supervision**

The Program Director and two other staff members will accompany the group to Paris. The Paris trip includes a mix of planned group activities, optional choices, and free time for independent exploration. Our Paris Digital Guide will offer suggestions for activities, restaurants, and walking tours to help participants structure their free time. Staff members remain accessible by phone for emergencies, and participants are requested to check in on our WhatsApp group regularly. Evening meal

suggestions will be provided for different budgets. Parents, please note that free time is remotely supervised, allowing participants to make their own decisions about meals, including alcohol consumption. There is a curfew of 10PM on the first night and 11PM on the remainder of the trip. A comprehensive orientation, three days before the trip, covers the itinerary, emergency protocols, and guidelines for checking in during free time.

### **Meals in Paris**

Breakfast is included at the residence each day. Lunch will be on your own with suggestions made. Dinners are not included and participant choice with suggestions will be made to accommodate all budgets. Please also see the section above about budgeting for meals.

### **What is included on the Paris Trip:**

- Residence costs
- Metro tickets to planned excursions
- Linens (including sheets and towel)
- Breakfast daily at residence
- All entrance fees to museums/attractions on our itinerary

### **What is not included on the Paris Trip:**

- Lunch (budget-friendly suggestions made each day)
- Dinners (budget-friendly suggestions made each day)
- Entrance fees to attractions not on our itinerary
- Metro tickets for trips of your own choice
- Rental of audio guides

A full Paris itinerary will be provided closer to the program start date.

## **SECTION 7. Program Information**

### **Orientation**

Participant orientation sessions will take place during the first two days of the program. We will review the contents of this handbook in detail including emergency procedures, contacts and scheduling as well as additional information relevant to residential life, life in France and orientation for each field trip including the Paris trip.

### **Staff/Student Ratios**

We maintain a staff to student ratio on every program of 4:1 while in our main residence (including Program Director, Associate Director, Teaching Staff and Household Staff) and 6:1 minimum while on any field trips, including our Paris trip.

## **Teaching/Mentoring**

The program offers classes and hands-on projects in your concentration as well as studio time to develop personal work. A variety of workshops are offered which are open to all participants regardless of Artistic Concentration. Participation in workshops and classes is mandatory except in the case of illness. Faculty is available for one-to-one mentoring by arrangement.

## **Schedule/Programming**

Classes generally follow this schedule:

8.15 - 9.00 – Breakfast in your residence

9:00 – 9:30 – Group Meeting (Tues/Thurs)

9:30 – Class Period 1 (Mon/Tues/Thurs) OR Creative Workshop (Wed/Fri)

12.30 – 1.30 – Lunch

1:30 – Class Period 2

3:30 – Class Period 3 (or Studio/Rehearsal Time)

5.45 – 7.00 – Dinner

**Artistic Concentration:** Each participant chooses an Artistic Concentration from: Acting, Studio Art, Filmmaking, Music or Design for Stage and Screen (Set, Costume, Lighting). AC's will offer a variety of classes and time to complete creative projects.

**Creative Workshops:** A variety of workshops are offered in the first half of the program so that participants can learn new skills and cross over into other disciplines. All participants must choose and attend a workshop in each series as well as attend all sessions.

**Studio Time:** This is designated creative time to work in the studio, rehearse, shoot, work with mentors and complete creative projects. Some AC's will span both AC time and Studio Time for example film shoots, which need additional time to complete.

**Field Trips:** There are full day, and half day field trips each week during the program. The majority of our full day field trips will take place on Saturdays however, we want to leave flexibility in the schedule to allow us to move around the weather. Field trips both group activities and free time to explore the destination on your own. Parents, please note that field trips include unsupervised time where participants are free to make their own decisions about meals including alcohol consumption. All of our staff attend the field trips and remain in contact in the area in case of emergency.

## **Participation and Attendance**

Full participation in the program is required of all participants including all classes, workshops, field trips, group activities, group sessions, household/kitchen duties and information sessions. Participants are expected to attend unless illness prevents them from doing so. Any illness lasting two days or more will require a doctor's visit.

Participants routinely missing classes, workshops, field tips or program activities will need to speak with the Program Director about their absences and conditions for continuing participation on the program may be discussed.

### **Computers**

You are encouraged to bring your laptop to the program, especially if you are a writer or filmmaker. You will need a simple US – France plug converter that can be bought inexpensively on Amazon. There is a printer and photocopier available for participant use.

The chateau has Wi-Fi although please be aware that it is not fibre optic and very slow by today's standards. You will be able to make/receive calls and texts with no problems, but you will not be able to stream music or movies on the program. Please come with media downloaded.

### **Phones**

For safety and security reasons, we require that each participant come to the program with a cell phone that has full, working service in France. Participants are required to have a charged mobile phone on their person at all times so that we can communicate with the participant. This includes roaming and data which is particularly important for our field trip days. You will need to speak with your provider to set this up before you come to France and be aware of what the charges are. We ask that you not use your phone during class time or at any other time that requires your attention to be directed toward program activities. Do not rely on purchasing a SIM card in Europe, you will not have phone service until this can be arranged and they are often difficult to set up (in French!) and unreliable.

### **Policies with Regards to Phone Use**

We ask students not to use their phones during class or workshop time and on any program activity, meeting, tour or field trip where your attention and participation are needed. This includes scrolling/texting and/or leaving to take or place a call unless it is an emergency. We also ask that you do not use your phone at the table during meal times.

### **Communication on the Program**

Whatsapp Groups: We will form a What's App group with all participants and staff for practical communication around program planning, scheduling or other necessary program information. The Whatsapp Group will commence 2 weeks before a program start date with the Program Director and Participants only. All other staff will be added on the day before arrival day. The Whats App group will be disbanded on departure day at 12 noon.



Artistic Concentrations may create specific Whats App groups (For example “Filmmakers”) with the permission of the Program Director. These groups will include relevant program participants, teachers and the Program Director and be disbanded by 12 noon on the final day of the program.

Please note that it is program policy that no Whats App groups may be created and/or used on the program that do not include the Program Director, Associate Director or appropriate teachers/mentors to that group.

**Bi-Weekly Meetings:** There will be a group meeting of all participants and staff twice per week on the program. These meetings will review practical information, scheduling and be a space to reflect on your experience with other participants.

**Household Meetings:** There will be a meeting once a week with each participant house on the program. These meetings will review any household needs and be a space to discuss and resolve any challenges that arise in community living.

### **Communication With Parents**

Participants are encouraged to keep connected with parents and family members throughout the program. The Program Director will send an opening email, mid-program email and closing email to all families with photos and updates on trips, activities, classes and projects. Parents are welcome to reach out to the Program Director via email at any time during the program for an update.

## **SECTION 8. Health and Wellness**

### **Attendance**

Participants are asked to attend all Workshops, Artistic Concentration sessions, field trips and group projects as part of the program unless illness prevents them from doing so. If a participant is going to miss class, the Program Director must be notified in the morning of that day. Any absence over two full days if the program will require a doctor’s visit.

### **Insurance**

Every participant is strongly advised to have overseas medical insurance in place before they come to France. Please see the section above under “Pre-Departure” for more details.

### **Immunization Recommendations**

All participants are strongly encouraged, although not required, to have the Covid-19 vaccine and a Covid-19 booster within the last 8-12 months. In addition, we encourage participants to be up to date with all vaccinations as they are outlined on our medical forms including Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Meningitis and Tetanus.

## **Physical Illness**

In the case that a participant is experiencing routine illness, they should alert the Program Director prior to any academic or program activities affected by their illness. We have excellent clinics and hospitals no more than 10 minutes away from our program. Any participant who requires medical care will be accompanied to the appropriate site – hospital or local clinic – by a member of program staff.

Participants are encouraged to be proactive in preventing routine illness by practicing healthy habits, including, but not limited to, getting plenty of rest, physical exercise and eating healthy food. In the case of an emergency or concern for a participant's health, Berridge Programs may contact the participant's family. Berridge Programs is not responsible for any fees associated with medical appointments, treatment or hospitalization.

## **Mental Wellness**

Participants and their families are encouraged to discuss and prepare for the potential challenges of attending a program that may be in an unfamiliar environment far from home. This preparation should include arranging for any necessary mental health assessments and support prior to the start of the program. We ask that participants be forthcoming about any mental health challenges both before and during the program. We ask participants to not attend the program if they are unsure about their current mental health. Please note that Berridge Programs is not a therapeutic program and does not have a mental health professional onsite and cannot facilitate access to mental health professionals in France.

## **Neurodiversity Support**

Our participants have a range of diversities in the way they function, process, focus, write, read, speak and/or express themselves. This may include diagnosed conditions such as ADHD or Dyslexia or anything that presents challenges in a traditional classroom, life skills and/or in social settings. If you are diagnosed with or believe you have any kind of neurodiversity, please feel welcome to get in touch with the Program Director so we can understand the ways in which we can support you.

## **Social Dynamics Support**

Participants needing support with social dynamics on the program may book time with the Program Director to discuss navigating specific situations.

The Program Director can

- provide a safe, confidential listening space.
- offer advice on how best to navigate the situation.

The Program Director cannot

- speak to another participant on your behalf.

- move you or the other participant to another room/house/class or excuse you from activities/classes based on your social difficulties.
- speak to your parents with regards to your situation unless given express permission from you.

Note to Parents: It is our policy not to act on information given to us solely by parents. The participant themselves must speak with us directly and be prepared to take steps to mediate and/or resolve the situation. Parents please be advised that we cannot share details without express permission from your child and, even then, we may not be able to disclose details that break the confidentiality of the other person(s) involved.

## **SECTION 9. General**

### **Data Collection**

Berridge Programs handles all participant data and information with strict confidentiality. We abide by all regulatory bodies with regards to Data Collection including US Privacy laws and European GDPR. This includes enrollment forms, health forms, financial information disclosed, payment methods collected, bank information, student records, contact information, accident/incident reports, Directors Logs, program reviews and any other data collected before, during or after the program. Here are some specifics with regards to how your data is handled:

- Data and information collected are shared only with essential personnel but may be shared with additional personnel and persons outside our program in the event of an emergency.
- Forms are kept on cloud-based storage that is password protected. If forms are downloaded, they are kept on an external hard drive that is password protected and kept securely. Forms are never printed.
- Enrolment forms are kept for 90 days post-program and then deleted completely.
- Financial information disclosed (tax returns, bank accounts, credit cards) is destroyed immediately after use.
- Health forms and sensitive data are collected using encrypted forms and deleted completely in a 7 days-post program.
- Information collected on the program (logs, accident books) is kept for 1 year post-program in a secure location and then shredded.
- Participant email addresses will be kept for 3 years post-program and added to our alumni email communications list. Participants may opt-out of this list at any time.

### **Privacy Rights**

Berridge Programs respects the privacy rights of all participants. Gap year students are over 18 and, as such, are treated as adults with regards to their right to privacy.

Although we are not bound by law to FERPA and HIPAA, we look to these laws to inform our best practices. Therefore, Participants over the age of 18 have a right to privacy unless they agree in writing for us to share information with a parent or guardian. Parents, please be informed that these privacy rights may extend to:

- Problems that may arise for a participant or between participants
- Disclosures made by a participant to the Program Director and other staff members
- Reasons around a participant's dismissal from the program
- Non-emergency medical treatments

### **Waiver of Privacy Rights**

Berridge Programs requires that participants give permission before the program start date to the Program Director to contact designated parents/guardians and emergency contacts in the event of a medical or mental health emergency. This may include medical information that may be shared without the participant's express consent if the Program Director deems it necessary for the safety and wellbeing of that participant.