



# AUROVILLE LANGUAGE LABORATORY

Auroville, 30<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

## Sub: RECOMMENDATION FOR PRATYUSHA AKUNURI

This is to state that PRATYUSHA AKUNURI was a volunteer at the Auroville Language Laboratory for 3.5 months, from February 10<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

Pratyusha's main task was to take one specific project of the Language Lab - the GlobalGiving Women's English language training project - forward, something that combined her interest in both development studies and language teaching. She also was a teaching assistant to teachers of English, French and German, observing and studying how they taught and assisting students both in class and outside class. Pratyusha also privately tutored a young student of French, who made excellent progress as a result of her efforts.

Pratyusha is a pleasure to work with. She is extremely responsive, flexible, open to ideas, and very quick on the uptake. She listens carefully and acts immediately. She is organized and extremely responsible. She always finishes the tasks assigned to her. She is good at both copywriting and design, creating brochures, posters, and promotional material, often coming up quickly with several options for the team to choose from. She is also quite equanimous and doesn't have ego hassles; she took edits in really the right spirit and came up with new copy right away, which was a refreshing change from other volunteers we have worked with!

She carries a positive energy and is good both while working as a team and on her own. While working individually, Pratyusha is excellent with both assigned tasks and self-driven work. She is hardworking and diligent. She takes initiative while always checking back if her work is fitting into the larger picture of the project. This is crucial for working as part of a large team.

Pratyusha is motivated by a strong sense of the larger good of humanity as a whole. When Covid-19 lockdown was declared and the Language Lab had to close, Pratyusha immediately volunteered her time making masks, which were in short supply. She did this with a lot of commitment and diligence. We also were able to trust her enough to invite her to share in the task of maintaining the Language Lab's security several times during the lockdown. In addition to her social commitment, Pratyusha also has a strong commitment to the environment.

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In terms of the academic side of her work as a teaching assistant:

- (i) In the English class, Pratyusha helped provide examples, create metaphors, and ensured everyone understood the material, especially the more abstract concepts.
- (ii) In the German class, she helped the students feel more at ease by providing relevant examples using her own background of learning German. She also pointed out to the teacher areas that would need extra explanation.
- (iii) In the French class, she acted as a translator and provided insight from a non-native speaker's perspective. She helped the students gain a better understanding by pre-empting their questions for the teacher. She used her knowledge of the phonetic alphabet to help students with pronunciation. She did extra research on the phonetic alphabet, found useful links, and shared them with the students.

During the Covid-19 lockdown period, Pratyusha took the initiative to privately tutor a young student of French (mentioned earlier). She created a curriculum based on her memory of learning French plus the knowledge gained while she was assisting the French classes at the Lab in the pre-Covid period. She created a French verbs master list, passé composé vs imparfait exercises, savoir vs connaitre, and verb conjugations. The quality of this work is excellent. She also integrated the resources and content available for online learning of French at the Language Lab website.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 lockdown prevented any substantial outreach work on the project for which Pratyusha had originally volunteered since the lockdown came just when she had started to do that. However, she did all the groundwork very diligently and prepared for that next step of the project. We hope we will be able to find another volunteer who will follow in Pratyusha's footsteps in a similar way.

We have absolutely no doubt that Pratyusha will approach her future studies with the same commitment and diligence she displayed during her volunteer period with us.

We wish her very well, and we are sure she will go very far, no matter what field of study and work she chooses.

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