



## Lale.help – FAQ

### **What is lale.help?**

Lale is an all-in-one system for secure administration of volunteers and efficient management of tasks, supplies and projects. It was developed for refugee aid groups and is free of charge.

### **Why Lale in the current COVID-19 situation?**

Germany was facing an unprecedented refugee crisis in 2015. Many new arrivals needed help and many people wanted to help. Lale was built to facilitate the organization of tasks and supplies, so helpers could spend their time on helping, not administrating.

In 2020 we have a sudden and unprecedented need to coordinate help in local communities where at-risk groups need to be protected and require aid while social distancing measures are in place. It is our hope that the task management platform can provide unbureaucratic support for anyone engaging this effort.

### **How does Lale work for the corona situation?**

Lale is organized around a group called a “helper circle”. This could be either an apartment building, an entire neighborhood or even a village. Volunteers sign up for such a circle. Within that, each apartment building or street could be its own working group, where volunteers living in that street can look for tasks. One or more volunteer could act as group leaders and manage the tasks and supplies recorded for such group.

The elderly will not necessarily be connected via computing devices. Adhering to social distancing protocols, a group leader could ask them door to door what their needs are and enter those in Lale. Individual helper can then sign up for the task and provide help.

All communication between helpers (task requests, comments, etc.) will be done via email and/or inside the Lale platform.

### **What other options are there?**

Many. The refugee crisis sparked a lot of great projects that were aimed at channeling volunteer activities. Lale has been in use by several helper circles for years now but has not seen wide adoption across Germany. Therefore, we have kept the project running in support mode. We are happy to increase our offering for corona support as a dedicated effort if that proves helpful.

But here is a list of platforms that are very active and successful in this space that we recommend checking out (thank you Natasha and Malte for all your incredible work):

What	Link	Focus
NeedsList	<a href="https://needslist.co/about">https://needslist.co/about</a>	Supplies in crisis situation.
GoVolunteer	<a href="https://govolunteer.com/en">https://govolunteer.com/en</a>	Finding volunteer groups to engage with.
Nebenan	<a href="https://nebenan.de/">https://nebenan.de/</a>	German neighborhood platform coordinating help.

The Lale platform was designed as a simple tasks management platform.

### **Will Lale work at scale (tech question)?**

The Lale platform is a Ruby on Rails app running on Heroku (AWS). It can therefore be scaled dynamically on server instances and database capacity. Email delivery is using Mandrill (Mailchimp) which is a scalable platform partner. We built it to be scalable from the start, but we haven't seen viral (excuse the word) spike activity yet. I am sure there will be hitches, but we should be able to overcome.

### **What kind of support is there?**

Frankly, we can provide only limited support and can only offer Lale on an "as is" basis and without any charge to the users (they are the ones doing all the helping so thank you!). Operating this platform is our form of volunteer aid and needs to be understood as such. We are not a commercial software business.