LEADERS OF TOMORROW

Applicant & Student Guide: Navigating the Bridges Portal

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Applicant & Student Guide: Navigating the Bridges Portal

Welcome to Bridges, the portal for the Leaders of Tomorrow (LOT) program. This guide walks you through everything you can do here, from your very first application to life inside the program and beyond. The portal adapts to where you are in your journey, so the menu you see changes as you move from applicant, to accepted student, to active participant, to alumnus.

Getting Started

1. On the Bridges home page click **Create Account**. Enter your email address and a password (at least 8 characters, with an uppercase letter, a lowercase letter and a number), and tick the box agreeing to the Privacy Policy, Cookie Policy and Data Processing Agreement.
2. We email you a 6-digit code. Enter it to confirm your email address. If it does not arrive, use **Resend code** and check your spam folder.
3. Complete your profile: your name, gender, mobile number, date of birth, nationality, country, state or province and address. You cannot apply until it is complete, and the portal emails you about reviews, interviews, payments and decisions, so keep these details accurate.
4. From then on you sign in with your email and password. You land on your **Dashboard** (always the first link in the top menu), your home base: it shows where you are and what to do next.
5. To change your details later, click your initial at the top right (**My Profile** in the mobile menu). There you can edit your profile, change your password, turn on two-factor sign-in with an authenticator app, and open Privacy Settings.

Your Dashboard, My Tasks and Notifications

Two links sit at the top of every page and are the fastest way to stay on track:

- **Dashboard** — a summary of where you are and what is open right now.
- **My Tasks** — your personal to-do list. It is built from live data, so an item disappears as soon as you have done it. Typical items: finish your draft application (while the cohort is still open), an upcoming interview, choose or complete your payment, sign a document, acknowledge a required policy, finish your enrollment checklist, submit an assignment, read a new announcement. A number badge next to "My Tasks" shows how many items are waiting. *Make a habit of clearing My Tasks; it is the single most reliable way to avoid missing a deadline.*

The bell icon in the top menu holds your in-app notifications, for example a new session or assignment meant for you. A round **Help** button at the bottom right of every page opens a new support ticket.

Applying to a Cohort

1. Click **Apply** in the top menu. The page has three tabs: **Student Programs** (the open cohorts, each with its closing date), **Volunteer Staff**, and **How to Apply** (public guides, video guides and downloads). Some resources are meant for one cohort and show only to people who applied to it.
2. On the cohort you want, click **Apply Now**, check the profile details shown, and click **Generate My Student ID & Start Application**. This creates your draft application and your User ID.
3. Open the application and click **Fill Form** (**Continue Form** once you have started). The form is split into steps: use **Next** and **Back** to move, and **Save & finish later** to stop part-way. Your answers are saved automatically each time you move to the next step (a "Saved" note appears), so you can leave and come back. Essay questions show a word counter and limit, and required questions are marked with an asterisk.
4. Back on the application page, **Submit** is available once every required question has an answer; until then the page tells you how many still need one. Check your answers first: once submitted you cannot edit the application.
5. After the cohort's closing date a draft can no longer be edited or submitted, so do not leave it to the last day.
6. Track everything from **My Applications**. Open an application to see its status, a "What happens next" strip (Submitted, Under Review, Interview, Decision) and the next step the portal is waiting on. You are also emailed whenever the status changes.

You can hold one student application per cohort and only one active student application at a time, and you cannot have a student and a volunteer-staff application together. Until you have been interviewed you can click **Withdraw Application** on the application page; withdrawing permanently removes it and frees you to apply again.

Tip: a draft application shows up in My Tasks until you submit it (or the deadline passes), so you always have a one-click path back to finish it.

After You Submit: Reviews and Interviews

You do not need to do anything while your application is being reviewed — staff read it and score it behind the scenes, and we email you when something needs you. In the end you receive a decision: **Accepted**, **Waitlisted** (we email you right away if a place opens up) or **Rejected** (you are welcome to apply to a future cohort).

If you are invited to an **interview**:

1. Open your application from **My Applications**. If your cohort lets applicants book their own interview and your interviewer has published times, a **Book Your Interview** list shows the open times in your local timezone: click a time and it is booked straight away. Otherwise your interviewer schedules the interview and emails you the details.

2. The interview card shows the date in your local time (with the cohort's time beside it), its status, a **Join Meeting** link and **Add to calendar**, which downloads a calendar file. We also email you a reminder ahead of the interview.
3. Click **Confirm Attendance**, or **Request Reschedule** (you can add a reason). Your interviewer is notified and you receive an email once a new time is set. Some interviewers confirm automatically; then the card already says your interview is confirmed and you do not need to reply.
4. If an interview is cancelled, deleted or marked as a no-show, you receive an email and a notification, the card shows its new status, and the join link and calendar download are gone. The email says whom to write to if you still want an interview.

If You Are Accepted: Payment and Enrollment

When you are accepted, new steps appear on your application and in My Tasks, and an **Enrollment Checklist** link appears in your menu. The checklist lists each step with its status and a button: **Program payment**, **Legal documents**, **Required policies**, **Host family** and **Your profile**. Work through it until it says you are all set.

Paying for your place:

1. Click **View Options** on your accepted application (or **Pay Now** on My Applications) to open **Select Your Payment Option**. Choose an option and click **Continue**. Prices are in euros; an option marked **No Payment Required** is free and confirms your choice at once. Each option lists what it includes (what its certificate certifies, whether a grant is applied for, what the private course is), and **Questions about the packages** below the options answers the common ones.
2. For a card option, click **Pay by card**. You are sent to a secure card page and brought back to Bridges; the payment is confirmed automatically and you do not need to enter anything.
3. For any other option, follow the instructions shown with it (for example a bank transfer), then click **I've Completed Payment** and enter your payment reference. The status becomes **Awaiting Verification** until the team confirms it, usually within one to three business days, and you are emailed when it is done.
4. Until your payment is confirmed you can change your choice from the payment page. If the page says enrollment payment is not open yet, there is nothing to do: it shows your options as soon as the program team opens it.

Signing documents:

- A **Documents** link appears in your menu, with a red number showing how many are waiting, whenever something needs your signature, and it stays once you have signed something. Open it, read each document, type your full legal name, tick the two confirmations and sign. Signed copies stay available to view or download.

- If you are under 18 and a document asks for it, you also enter a parent or guardian's name, relationship and email. We email them a private link to read and sign too, and the agreement is complete once they have. Until then the page says **Waiting for your parent or guardian**, with a button to email them the link again. If you typed their email wrong, use **Correct their details** on that page (up to three times): we email the new address and the old link stops working.

Required policies:

- **Policies & Guides** shows a red number when a policy needs your acknowledgement, and it is also listed on My Tasks, on the Documents page under **Policies to Acknowledge**, and on the checklist. Accepted students acknowledge the Student Code of Conduct; students are also asked to acknowledge the Anti-Harassment & Sexual Misconduct Policy. Open the policy, read it and click **I have read and agree**. If a policy is updated you are asked again.

Your host family: staff usually place you in a host family and you are notified. If your cohort opens family choice, the checklist step reads **Choose your family** until the deadline shown there (in UTC). The page lists each family by city with its facilitator, how many places are left and its upcoming sessions. Pick one and confirm: after that only staff can move you, and anyone who has not chosen by the deadline is placed by staff. Once you are placed, **View family** shows your family, the facilitator's name and LOT contact details, and the other members by name only; LOT never shows students each other's email addresses.

Once You Are in the Program

After you are enrolled, your menu switches to the in-program view:

- **Program Profile** — your details, your cohort, family and city, and your attendance rate against the target, marked as on track or at risk.
- **Calendar** — the program-wide, city and family sessions meant for you, as a **Month** grid or a **Week** list, with chips to show or hide each kind. Click a session, then **View Details**, for its time, a **Join Meeting** link when it is online, a description, **Add to Calendar**, and **Your Response** (Attending, Maybe or Not Attending). **Download iCal** gives you a calendar file with all your upcoming sessions. You get an email and a notification when a new session or assignment is for you, and a reminder email the day before and on the day of a session with your week's schedule (session times in these emails are in UTC).
- **Assignments** — work set by your facilitators and instructors. Open one to read it and submit before the deadline. Depending on the assignment you write a text response, upload a file (PDF, Word or an image, up to 10 MB) or answer questions. **Save Draft** keeps your work without handing it in (the page says "Draft saved"); only **Submit Assignment** submits it. Some assignments allow more than one attempt. When an instructor leaves feedback it appears on the assignment page as a written comment from them; there are no marks.

- **My Progress** — your graduation progress: attendance, how many assignments you have submitted, and the status of your graduation review. Your facilitator reviews your overall participation and a supervisor makes the final decision; there is no automatic cutoff.
- **Announcements** — official news from program staff for your cohort, city or family. Pinned posts come first and new ones are marked **New**. Check it regularly.
- **Certificates** — certificates you have earned; you can view and download them here, and under **My Profile** on the **Certificates** tab, where **Verify** shows the public check page.

If the team gives you an award and makes it visible, you receive an email and a **New award received** task.

When you graduate, your alumni access starts automatically: the menu shows **Alumni Network** and your certificate is issued (see the Alumni Guide).

Getting Help

- **Policies & Guides** — opens the Document Center, where this guide and other policies and how-to documents live. Read these to understand the program's rules and processes.
- **Support** — opens the in-app Support Tickets system, as does the **Help** button at the bottom right. Open a ticket whenever you are stuck, have a question, or hit a problem; staff reply inside the same ticket so the whole conversation stays in one place.
- If you cannot sign in or reach the Support page, email help@lotep.org.

Best practice: keep your contact details current, clear My Tasks promptly, and use a Support ticket rather than guessing — it creates a record and gets you the fastest answer.