



Summer Academy Preliminary Overview

From the Founder

The Vere Vitae Summer Academy was created from a deeply held conviction: that education must develop the whole human being — not only the intellect, but also character, judgment, resilience, and a sense of purpose.

What began as a vision to create a place where children feel seen, supported, and challenged to grow has taken root alongside the Vere Vitae retreat in the hills of Calabria, where nature, simplicity, and intentional living shape the learning environment.

The Academy integrates a holistic and developmentally attuned approach to learning, combining narrative-based teaching, experiential exploration, and immersion in the natural world. Its aim is to cultivate clarity of mind, strength of character, emotional maturity, and the confidence to think independently and act with integrity.

This vision is shaped by my own life and educational journey across cultures and systems. I studied in France, Spain, and the United States, and later attended Miami Dade College, the University of Pennsylvania, and Georgetown University, along with executive leadership education at Harvard Business School. Living, studying, and working across countries and professional fields exposed me to diverse educational models and reinforced a central insight: intellectual rigor alone is not enough. Young people must also develop judgment, adaptability, self-awareness, and the ability to navigate a complex and changing world.

The Vere Vitae Academy brings together these experiences into a single commitment: to create a learning environment that develops capable thinkers, grounded individuals, and responsible human beings.

My intention is to build a place where each child is recognized as an individual to be cultivated — not a mold to be filled — so that their light may grow with confidence, depth, and authenticity.

— *Giadha A. De Carcer*, [Founder & Director](#)

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Executive Summary

The Vere Vitae Summer Academy is a 4 to 8-week, small-cohort boarding program in Calabria, Italy, designed for children ages 8–12-. The Academy offers a values-centered, experiential education model that integrates storytelling, arts, movement, nature-based exploration, and hands-on projects across languages, sciences, humanities, and life skills.

With a maximum cohort of 30–35 students (nine students per class group), the program emphasizes continuity of relationship, emotional safety, and learning through doing. A scholarship model supports socio-economic diversity, and parent engagement is treated as an essential part of the child’s learning ecosystem.

The Academy’s purpose is not acceleration or competition, but the cultivation of capable, grounded, ethical young leaders—children who can think clearly, relate respectfully, and act with integrity in a complex world.

Our Core & Essence

Identify

Vere Vitae: Latin for “Sprint of Life”

Ex Radice Ad Lucem: Latin for “From Roots to Light”

Mission

Today’s Children for a Better Tomorrow - To cultivate clear-minded, values-rooted children who can meet the world with curiosity, discernment, empathy, and the confidence to contribute meaningfully.

Vision

Live to Learn - A new model of summer boarding education where nature, story, and hands-on creation form the foundation for intellectual growth, emotional intelligence, and ethical action.

Values

- Reverence for Nature
- Clarity of Mind
- Integrity in Action
- Sovereignty of Spirit
- Responsibility in Living

Guiding & Educational Principles

- Creativity without Conformity
- Belonging before Performance
- Effort before Outcome
- Character before Credential

Goals

By the end of the summer, students will have strengthened:

- **Discernment:** the ability to evaluate information, sources, and intent.
- **Moral imagination:** the capacity to sense what is true, fair, and kind—and act on it.
- **Self-leadership:** confidence without ego; sovereignty with humility.
- **Relational intelligence:** communication across difference; cooperation and repair.

- **Creative agency:** the courage to explore, build, revise, and try again.

The Vere Vitae Academic Model

The Vere Vitae Summer Academy is designed to complement, not replace, students' regular schooling, regardless of their country or educational system. Rather than focusing on additional academic content or curriculum coverage, the program approaches learning from a developmental perspective — emphasizing how knowledge is acquired, how thinking is developed, and how character, judgment, and curiosity are cultivated. The intention is to strengthen the learner, not duplicate the classroom.

“The goal is not to accelerate children — but to strengthen the learner.”

Initial Program Targets & Specifications

- **Format:**
 - Residential Summer Program
 - Two fixed sessions, each **4 weeks** in duration
 - Students may enroll in one or both sessions
- **Ages:** 8–12
- **Cohort size:** 30–35 per session; ~6 students per Thematic Lead
- **Teaching model:** students remain with their class group; subject teachers rotate
- **Continuity:** each subject teacher follows the student cohort across years to build trust and coherence
- **Learning approach:** narrative-based instruction, experiential projects, outdoor learning, and arts integration
- **Access model:** 30% scholarship / 70% paid (socio-economic bridge)

- **Diversity:** balanced representation across culture, background, and gender to the extent feasible
- **Family partnership:** parent engagement strongly encouraged and structured (orientation, updates, closing integration)

Pedagogical Framework & Educational Philosophy

The Vere Vitae Academy draws inspiration from established traditions of holistic and developmental education. These influences include narrative-based and experiential approaches often associated with Waldorf education, the emphasis on independence and practical life found in Montessori practice, and cultural models—such as those seen in Japan—where responsibility, contribution, and learning through participation precede formal evaluation.

“The Vere Vitae model is intentionally small, relational, and high touch by design.”

The **Waldorf** tradition emphasizes imagination, rhythm, and narrative as primary pathways to understanding, recognizing that children in the pre-adolescent years learn most deeply when meaning is carried through story, pattern, and creative engagement. **Montessori** practice emphasizes independence, hands-on exploration, and practical life skills, affirming that confidence and competence develop through purposeful activity and responsibility for one’s own work. Cultural practices such as those found in **Japan** emphasize responsibility, practice, and contribution, supporting the development of dignity, belonging, and social awareness through meaningful participation in the care and functioning of the community.

The Vere Vitae approach integrates these influences into three complementary developmental dimensions. **Inner development** cultivates imagination, meaning, emotional depth, and self-awareness. **Self-mastery** emphasizes independence, focus, discipline, and practical competence. **Outer grounding** develops responsibility, contribution, and care for the shared environment, recognizing that belonging and confidence grow through meaningful participation in community life.

Inner Development	Self-Mastery (Independence)	Outer Grounding
Imagination	Choice & Ownership	Responsibility
Rhythm	Focus & Discipline	Practice
Narrative & Meaning	Practical Competence	Contribution
Self-awareness	Care for Self & Environment	Care for Community

Together, these dimensions guide the child’s development from inner awareness to capable action, to responsible participation in the world.

Developmental Orientation

Narrative and patterned experiences that align with children’s natural developmental rhythms, allow imagination to serve as a bridge to understanding rather than a distraction from it, recognizing childhood as a formative process of becoming, not merely a period of information acquisition.

Designed specifically for children ages 8–12—a stage characterized by imagination, moral curiosity, and relational sensitivity—the Academy emphasizes learning experiences that engage the whole child: **thinking, feeling, and doing**. At this age, understanding is most deeply formed through story, movement, creative expression, and meaningful activity rather than abstraction alone.

Teaching is ultimately guided by careful observation of each child’s developmental stage, temperament, and emerging capacities, allowing instruction to meet the learner where they are rather than forcing premature abstraction.

Learning as Experience, Story, and Relationship

Learning at Vere Vitae is **experiential and embodied**. Concepts are introduced through **narrative**, explored through **hands-on practice**, and integrated through reflection and

dialogue. Storytelling serves not as entertainment, but as a cognitive and ethical vessel—awakening imagination as a vehicle for understanding, empathy, and discernment.

Experiential learning is grounded in an atmosphere of **trust**, where students feel **safe** to **explore**, make mistakes, revise their thinking, and **engage deeply without fear of comparison or failure**.

Role of the Teacher & Continuity

Central to this philosophy is the **teacher as long-term guide**. Continuity of relationship allows educators to observe each child over time, attune to their developmental rhythms, and respond with care and precision. This approach reduces fragmentation of authority, fosters trust, and creates emotional coherence—conditions essential for deep learning and healthy self-development.

Through sustained relationship, teachers develop attunement to students’ rhythms of engagement, challenge, and rest—**allowing guidance that is responsive, timely, and humane**.

“Childhood is not preparation for life — it is the formation of the person.”

“Story is used as a cognitive and ethical vessel — not entertainment.”

Education as Becoming (not performance)

Rather than emphasizing competition, acceleration, or performance metrics, Vere Vitae views **education as a process of becoming**. The aim is to cultivate clarity of mind, integrity of action, and sovereignty of spirit—so that children grow not only in knowledge, but in self-leadership, moral imagination, and confidence rooted in humility.

“Contribution grows from belonging.”

This approach reflects a fundamental trust in the child’s unfolding process, privileging depth, integrity, and inner motivation over external reward or acceleration. Contribution is understood not as obligation, but as an expression of belonging and becoming—**children learn that they matter because what they do matters**.

Curriculum Architecture

Purpose of the Curriculum

The curriculum at the Vere Vitae Summer Academy is designed to cultivate **understanding, discernment, and agency** rather than content accumulation alone. Subject areas are treated not as isolated disciplines, but as lenses through which children explore meaning, responsibility, creativity, and their place in the world.

“Subjects are treated as lenses for understanding the world — not isolated content silos.”

Learning unfolds through themes and experiences that deepen over time, allowing students to revisit essential questions from multiple perspectives—intellectual, ethical, creative, and practical.

Curricular Domains

- **Languages & Communication**
(spoken language, storytelling, listening, dialogue, multilingual exposure)
- **Sciences & Systems of the World**
(natural sciences, physics, environmental systems, emerging technologies)
- **Humanities & Social Understanding**
(history, geography, biographies, cultures, ethics)
- **Mathematics & Applied Thinking**
(numeracy, logic, problem-solving, real-world application)
- **Arts, Movement & Expression**
(visual arts, music, reading, sports, embodied learning)
- **Inner Development & Life Skills**
(self-awareness, emotional intelligence, mindfulness, health, nutrition)

Inner Development & Life Skills are cultivated both as a dedicated domain and as an underlying thread across all areas of learning.

Methodological Approach

Instruction at Vere Vitae is intentionally narrative-based, experiential, and project-centered. Concepts are introduced through story and inquiry, explored through hands-on practice and outdoor engagement, and integrated through reflection, dialogue, and creative expression.

Learning frequently occurs outside the traditional classroom, with nature, community life, and shared responsibilities serving as active educational environments. Projects are designed to encourage exploration, revision, collaboration, and meaningful contribution rather than speed or competition.

***“Students leave
with evidence of
how they think
— not just what
they know.”***

Intended Capacities Developed

Students leave Vere Vitae able to:

- **Discernment** — the ability to think clearly, evaluate information, and make sound judgments
- **Moral imagination** — the capacity to consider consequences, perspectives, and ethical responsibility
- **Self-leadership** — initiative, accountability, and the ability to manage one’s time, effort, and attention
- **Relational intelligence** — communication, empathy, collaboration, and constructive conflict navigation
- **Creative agency** — confidence to generate ideas, take initiative, and bring projects to completion

Students complete the program with a personal learning portfolio that documents their work, reflections, and demonstrated growth across these areas. This portfolio provides a tangible record of experience, initiative, and applied learning that can be shared with families and future schools, reflecting not only what students have learned, but how they think, work, and take responsibility for their growth.

Spiral & Integration Logic

Topics are revisited in a spiral manner, allowing ideas introduced through story or experience to be returned to with greater depth, complexity, and application over time. **Domains are intentionally integrated**—ethical questions appear within science, creativity informs problem-solving, and history is approached through biography and lived experience—reflecting the interconnected nature of real-world understanding.

Curriculum Architecture by Thematic Lead (Table 1)

To support **depth**, **continuity**, and **coherence** within a small faculty model, the Academy organizes teaching around **Thematic Leads** rather than subject-specific instructors. Each educator carries a constellation of related themes aligned with their individual strengths, training, and interests, allowing learning to unfold across disciplines through a unified voice and relationship.

This approach reduces fragmentation, supports continuity of relationship, and enables students to encounter subjects as interconnected aspects of lived experience rather than isolated academic silos.

Given the Academy’s international context and diverse student body, **foreign language learning is treated as a core competency** rather than an auxiliary subject. Language instruction emphasizes active use, cultural literacy, and communication over rote memorization, enabling students to engage meaningfully across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Language offerings are selected for global relevance, cultural reach, and long-term communicative value.

- **English:** global lingua franca (science, diplomacy, technology)
- **Spanish:** demographic growth, the Americas, Europe, Africa
- **Chinese (Mandarin):** economic, geopolitical, future-facing literacy

Thematic Lead	Core Areas of Responsibility	Representative Topics & Practices
Languages & Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign language acquisition (English + additional world languages) • Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills • Cultural literacy and communication across contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immersive language use in daily life • Storytelling, dialogue, and presentation • Historical narratives and cultural context • Engagement with classical texts and stories appropriate to age • Biographical storytelling across cultures • Evaluation of sources, translation, bias, and credibility in media and online information
Nature, Science & Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural sciences and scientific inquiry • Ecology, environment, and living systems • Technology understood as human-designed systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation, hypothesis, testing, and revision • Ecology and environmental systems • Cultivation (growing plants, caring for animals) • Introduction to astronomy through observation (e.g. star watching) • Exploration of how tools and systems shape human life

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing claims through observation and evidence
Mathematics, Logic & Applied Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy and foundational mathematics • Logical reasoning and problem-solving • Applied thinking in real-world contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterns, probability, and cause-and-effect relationships • Logic, evidence vs. opinion; structured reasoning • Measurement, planning, and basic economics • Games and challenges that develop logic and strategy
Arts, Movement & Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual arts and creative practices • Music & Rhythm • Physical education, movement and embodied learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing, painting, sculpture, and creative making • Musical exploration and listening • Sports, games, coordination, and physical discipline • Expressive movement and performance
Inner Development, Ethics & Community Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical reflection and moral development • Emotional intelligence and self-awareness • Community life, responsibility, and contribution • Foundations of self-awareness and emotional understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection on stories, biographies, and lived experience • Mindfulness, emotional regulation, and age-appropriate exploration of emotions and relationships • Health, nutrition, and care of the self • Shared responsibilities and care of common spaces • Contribution to community life and collective projects • Ethical reflection through historical events, classical stories, and biographies

**Topics are introduced through inquiry, story, and experiential learning appropriate to developmental readiness; depth and emphasis vary by age group.*

Core Inquiries & Intellectual Anchors (Table 2)

While the Curriculum Architecture defines the areas of responsibility carried by each Thematic Lead, the learning experience at Vere Vitae is guided by a deeper layer of inquiry. Rather than organizing education around content coverage alone, **the Academy is shaped by enduring questions that cultivate ways of thinking, perceiving, and engaging with the world.**

These **Core Inquiries and Intellectual Anchors** serve as the **philosophical foundation for instructional design**. They inform the selection of content, the framing of experiences, and the developmental outcomes sought across all areas of study. The illustrative applications that follow are not intended as a fixed curriculum, but as examples of how each thematic area may translate these questions into meaningful learning experiences.

Thematic Lead	Enduring Questions	Capacities Cultivated	Illustrative Application
Languages & Cross-Cultural Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does language shape thought, identity, and culture? • What is lost or gained in translation? • Who is telling this story, and why? • What makes a source trustworthy? • Why do certain stories endure across time and cultures? 	Discernment, cultural literacy and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media literacy: sourcing, vetting, and evaluating information • Communication across cultural and social contexts • Historical narratives, the Classics, and global biographies • Learning from past challenges to inform future solutions • Age-appropriate exploration of geography, culture, and global cooperation/conflict
Nature, Science & Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we know what we know? • What is evidence and what is assumption? • What happens when evidence challenges our beliefs? • What responsibilities come with knowledge? 	Curiosity, systems thinking, stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific observation and inquiry • Exploration of the natural environment and ecosystems • Understanding the interconnected world (environment, culture, society) • Caring for living systems (plants and/or animals) • Exploring big scientific questions about the universe
Mathematics, Logic & Applied Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evidence supports this claim? • How can numbers clarify or mislead? • What patterns help us understand the world? • How do we reason clearly and make sound decisions? 	Analytical thinking, problem-solving, practical judgment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundational numeracy applied to real-life contexts • Problem solving and decision-making exercises • Introduction to entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship • Basic financial literacy for personal and community life
Arts, Movement & Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we express ideas, emotions, and experience? • How does discipline support creativity? 	Creative agency, confidence, embodiment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of visual arts, music, and movement • Physical development and coordination • Meditation and mind–body awareness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the body support learning and well-being? • What activities energize and inspire me? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of personal interests, talents, and evolving preferences • Exploration of diverse philosophical and cultural perspectives through art, movement, storytelling, and creative expression
<p style="text-align: center;">Inner Development , Ethics & Community Life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does it mean to live with integrity? • Who am I becoming? • How do my choices affect others and the community? • What values guide responsible leadership and contribution? 	<p>self-leadership, moral imagination, relational intelligence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical reflection through real-life situations and historical examples • Exploration of values such as honesty, responsibility, and kindness • Foundations of emotional awareness and healthy self-worth • Understanding relationships, empathy, and respect for differences • Reflection on family, identity, and personal direction

Together, these inquiries and capacities establish the intellectual and developmental direction of the Vere Vitae Academy. They are intended to guide educational design rather than prescribe fixed content or sequencing. As the program evolves, **academic partners and faculty will translate these foundations into age-appropriate learning experiences, projects, and assessments** that remain aligned with the Academy’s core philosophy while responding to the needs of each cohort. In this way, learning at Vere Vitae remains both **intentional** and **adaptive, grounded in enduring principles** while open to **growth, discovery, and collaboration.**

Vere Vitae – More than Academics

At Vere Vitae, education extends beyond formal instruction to include the rhythms, relationships, and environment that shape a child’s daily experience. Learning is understood as a whole-person process, where intellectual growth develops alongside physical well-being, emotional maturity, social responsibility, and a sense of connection to the natural and human world. The following elements describe the living context within which the academic model takes place.

“Learning at Vere Vitae is shaped as much by environment, rhythm, and community life as by formal instruction.”

Rhythm & Daily Life

Daily life at Vere Vitae follows a **consistent rhythm** that balances intellectual work, physical movement, creative expression, outdoor time, and periods of reflection. **Predictable structure** supports emotional security and focus, while varied activities sustain curiosity and engagement. Time is intentionally allocated for **unstructured play, quiet reflection, and shared responsibilities**, allowing students to develop independence, self-regulation, and a healthy relationship with effort and rest.

Role of Nature

The natural environment is an essential learning partner. Outdoor time is integrated into daily life, encouraging observation, exploration, and physical activity. Students engage directly with living systems through gardening, environmental care, and seasonal awareness. Regular contact with nature supports **attention, resilience, curiosity**, and a sense of **stewardship** for the world they inhabit.

Engagement with the natural environment is not passive or recreational, but **participatory**—inviting students into practices of care, stewardship, and respect for shared spaces.

Role of Technology

Technology is approached intentionally and in alignment with developmental needs. During the primary years, emphasis is placed on direct experience, human interaction, hands-on learning, and sustained attention.

At the same time, the Academy recognizes that emerging technologies — including artificial intelligence — will shape the environments in which today’s children will live and work. Rather than emphasizing early dependence on digital tools, **the program prioritizes the development of the human capacities** that will remain essential in an AI-enabled world: critical thinking, ethical judgment,

“Nature is not a setting for learning — it is a teacher.”

“In an AI-enabled world, humanity, creativity, and ethical reasoning become essential skills.”

creativity, discernment, communication, and the ability to evaluate information responsibly.

Technology, when introduced, is used purposefully to support research, media literacy, and the thoughtful evaluation of sources, with the goal of forming **capable, responsible, and discerning future users rather than passive consumers**.

Faculty Model & Student Support

Faculty members serve not only as subject leaders but as consistent adult anchors in the student experience. **Small cohort sizes allow educators to know each child well and to observe their academic, social, and emotional development over time.** Emphasis is placed on trust, attunement, and relationship-based guidance. Regular communication among faculty supports coordinated oversight, while pastoral care practices promote student well-being, safety, and a strong sense of belonging. All faculty operate within established safeguarding and supervision protocols appropriate to a residential program.

The Academy operates with a deliberately small team of educators, each serving as a Thematic Lead responsible for carrying a coherent field of inquiry across domains rather than delivering isolated subject instruction. Selection prioritizes individuals whose talent, training, and lived experience support **interdisciplinary thinking, careful observation, adaptability,** and alignment with the Academy's developmental philosophy.

Because the program is residential and intensive, faculty recruitment focuses on educators, practitioners, and professionals from international contexts who **bring both subject expertise and personal maturity.** Selection criteria include demonstrated experience working with children or adolescents, cross-cultural adaptability, strong communication skills in English, and the capacity to engage students in a relational and developmental manner.

Faculty participate as a residential teaching community for the duration of the summer session. This structure supports continuity of relationship, collaborative planning across themes, and the creation of a cohesive learning environment grounded in shared purpose. The Academy seeks individuals drawn not only to a teaching role, but to a period of focused educational practice within a values-driven setting.

Supervision, Health & Safeguarding

Student well-being and safety are foundational to the residential model. The Academy maintains continuous adult presence on site, including overnight supervision, ensuring that students are

supported at all times. Faculty members share responsibility for supervision as part of the residential teaching community, supported by the Program Director and additional operational staff.

“Every student is known well by at least one adult who follows their development over time.”

“Residential life is structured to balance independence with appropriate supervision, creating an environment that is both secure and developmentally supportive.”

The program operates with a low student-to-adult ratio, allowing close attention to individual needs and early response to concerns. **Clear safeguarding policies, background screening for all staff, and established child protection protocols guide all interactions and responsibilities.**

Basic health and medical procedures are in place, including collection of medical information prior to arrival, access to local medical services, and **designated staff trained in first aid and emergency response.**

The **Program Director resides on site during** the summer session and oversees daily operations, student welfare, and program continuity.

Culture & Community

The culture of Vere Vitae emphasizes belonging before performance and contribution before recognition. **Students participate in shared responsibilities** such as caring for common spaces, supporting peers, and contributing to daily community life. Diversity of background, perspective, and experience is welcomed and explored through dialogue and shared activities. Expectations around **respect, effort, accountability, and kindness** are reinforced through practice rather than policy, creating an environment where students feel both supported and responsible for the well-being of the whole.

***“Belonging comes
before
performance.
Contribution comes
before recognition.”***

Students receive a simple Vere Vitae program shirt used during excursions and group activities. The intent is to reinforce a sense of belonging and shared experience rather than uniformity or formality.

“The future will not be shaped by information alone, but by the character, judgment, and humanity of those who lead it. Vere Vitae exists to cultivate exactly that.” – Giadha A. DeCarcer

Vere Vitae is conceived as a place of formation rather than instruction alone — a setting where young people step temporarily outside the pressures of performance to **strengthen the habits of mind, character, and curiosity** that will support them throughout their formal education and beyond. By **working alongside, rather than in place of, traditional schooling**, the program seeks to cultivate more **capable learners**, more **thoughtful decision-makers**, and more **grounded young individuals**.

As the Academy develops, its structure and practices will continue to evolve through collaboration with educators and academic partners, while remaining anchored in its central aim: **to help each student grow not only in what they know, but in how they think, who they are becoming, and how they engage with the world.**

Operational & Feasibility Overview

Vere Vitae occupies a premium boutique position within the international summer education market, offering a small-cohort, high-attention alternative to large residential camps and academic intensives.

Feasibility Snapshot

Launch Target

Summer 2030

Program Capacity

30–35 students per session

Two sessions per summer

Tuition Range

€4,500 – €6,500 per 4-week session

Break-Even

≈ 30–32 students

Annual Revenue Potential

€350K – €450K

Operating Costs

€135K – €210K

Capital Required

€750K – €1.5M

Use of Funds

- Construction
- Furnishing
- Permits
- Pre-launch marketing
- Working capital

Legal Structure

Independent nonprofit / Third Sector entity (ETS or Foundation)

Governance & Organization

Leadership & Advisory Structure

The Vere Vitae Academy will operate under a dedicated legal entity structured to support its educational mission, long-term sustainability, and philanthropic development.

The Academy will be led by the Founder and Director, responsible for vision, program design, faculty selection, and overall operational oversight.

To ensure strategic guidance, accountability, and long-term institutional development, the Academy will be supported by a **Board of Advisors** composed of professionals from relevant fields, including:

- Education and child development
- Organizational leadership and governance
- Finance and nonprofit development
- Health, safety, and youth safeguarding
- International education and cross-cultural programming

The Advisory Board will provide:

- Strategic and ethical guidance
- Program and curriculum feedback
- Financial and operational oversight recommendations
- Support for partnerships, fundraising, and institutional growth

This governance model is designed to balance visionary leadership with professional oversight, ensuring that the Academy grows as a stable, mission-driven institution. As the Academy develops, this structure may evolve into a formal governing board appropriate to the legal entity and regulatory framework.

Operational Structure (Initial Phase)

Founder & Director (Giada A. DeCarcner)

- Overall strategic direction
- Educational philosophy oversight
- Faculty selection and supervision
- Parent relations and partnerships
- Financial and operational management

The advisory board structure is designed to progressively distribute governance and institutional oversight beyond the founder.

Academic Faculty (5 Thematic Leads)

- Curriculum design and delivery within thematic domains
- Student supervision and mentorship
- Residential participation during summer session

Early governance is intentionally lean, allowing quality control, relational depth, and financial sustainability.

Operational Support

The Academy is supported by a dedicated residential and operational team to ensure a safe, well-coordinated, and professionally managed environment.

Residential & Medical

- **Full-time residential nurse (24/7 presence)** providing medical oversight, health monitoring, first response care, and night supervision.
- The nurse resides on-site in dedicated staff accommodations within the student dormitory area.
- External medical services and local hospital coordination available as needed.

Facilities & Environment

- Residential caretaker / facilities and grounds maintenance
- Housekeeping staff for daily cleaning and hygiene standards

Food Services

- Kitchen team (minimum two staff) providing daily meals and dietary accommodation where required

Program Coordinator / Operations Assistant

- Daily scheduling and logistics
- Student attendance and activity coordination
- Faculty support and materials management
- Parent communication and administrative follow-up
- Event and excursion coordination

The operational structure is intentionally designed to provide continuous supervision, professional health support, and consistent program coordination within a safe and well-managed residential environment.

Regulatory & Licensing Path (Italy)

The Vere Vitae Academy will be constituted as an independent non-profit legal entity under Italian law, structured within the Third Sector framework (Ente del Terzo Settore or Foundation). This structure enables the Academy to operate as a private educational institution while accessing philanthropic contributions, grants, and institutional funding in support of its long-term educational mission.

The Academy is designed initially as a **seasonal educational program / summer academy**, not a year-round formal school.

This structure allows operation under:

- Educational / cultural program framework (attività educativa estiva)
- Health & safety compliance (local ASL)
- Fire safety certification (CPI if required)
- Liability insurance (RC civile + professional)

Future expansion options:

- Recognition as a private educational institution (scuola privata/paritaria)

- International accreditation pathways (long-term)

This phased approach reduces regulatory burden during initial launch.

Program Model & Tuition

Format

- Residential summer academy
- Two fixed sessions, each **4 weeks** in duration
- Students may enroll in one or both sessions
- Ages: 8–12
- Cohort size: approximately **30–35 students per session**
- Learning groups of **6–8 students per Thematic Lead**

Positioning

A boutique, high-touch, international residential program designed to provide individualized attention, strong relationships, and an immersive developmental experience.

Indicative Tuition Range

€4,500 – €6,500 per 4-week session

Tuition includes:

- Residential accommodation
- All meals and snacks
- Instruction and materials
- Workshops and experiential activities
- Local excursions and nature-based programming
- 24/7 supervision and medical support

This pricing aligns with premium European residential programs while reflecting the Academy's small cohort size and individualized learning model.

Facilities & Development Status

The Academy will be located on the Vere Vitae estate on land historically used for education.

Building Status

- Architectural design completed (3-story structure)
- Planned use:
 - Level 0: Offices & common areas
 - Level -1: Kitchen, dining, outdoor learning/garden
 - Level 1: Classrooms
 - Level 2: Student dormitories

Development Phase

Planned construction with phased implementation aligned to enrollment targets and funding.

High-Level Financial Model (Phase 1)

Estimated Annual Operating Costs (Two 4-week residential sessions —One Summer Season)

The operating season includes approximately 10–11 weeks, consisting of two 4-week student sessions plus preparation, transition, and closing periods for faculty and operational staff.

Personnel

• 5 Faculty / Thematic Leads (8–10 weeks including preparation):	€75K – €110K
• Residential Nurse (24/7 medical supervision) (€1,800–€2,500/month gross seasonal equivalent)	€8K – €12K
• Program Coordinator / Operations Manager (local bilingual graduate / administrative professional)	€6K – €10K
• Kitchen Staff (2 seasonal) (~€1,200–€1,500/month each)	€8K – €12K total
• Housekeeping & Facilities Support	€4K – €6K
Grounds / Maintenance (part-time seasonal)	€2K – €4K
• Director / Founder (allocated or deferred)	Variable

Operations

• Food & kitchen supplies (local sourcing keeps this low)	€12K – €18K
• Insurance (liability, student, medical)	€4K – €8K
• Utilities & facility maintenance	€4K – €8K
• Educational materials & workshops	€6K – €12K
• Transportation & excursions	€3K – €6K
• Marketing & admissions	€6K – €15K
• Legal, accounting & compliance	€3K – €6K

Estimated Total Operating Range

€135K – €210K (per summer)

Operational staffing reflects a hybrid model: international academic leadership combined with locally recruited support personnel, allowing the Academy to maintain high educational quality while operating efficiently within the regional cost structure.

Revenue Example

35 students × €5,500 average tuition × 2 sessions = **€385,000**

Scenario	Cost	Surplus
Conservative	€210K	~€175K
Efficient	€160K	~€225K
Lean	€135K	~€250K

Projected operating costs reflect a small-scale, high-touch model designed for quality, safety, and sustainability. The Academy is structured to reach operational self-sufficiency at approximately 60–70% enrollment capacity.

Break-Even Analysis

Scenario	Operating Cost	Break-Even Students	Revenue at Break-Even
Lean	€140K	26	€143K
Moderate	€170K	31	€171K
Conservative	€200K	37	€203K

The program reaches operational break-even at approximately **30–32 students total for a summer season**, depending on annual cost levels.

Operating surpluses are reinvested to expand scholarship capacity, enhance facilities, and support long-term program development.

Development & Capital Needs

Estimated One-Time Investment

Construction & infrastructure:	€600K–€1.2M
Furniture & equipment:	€60K–€120K
Permits, professional fees:	€40K–€80K
Pre-launch marketing:	€15K–€30K
Working capital / runway:	€50K–€100K

Market Opportunity

Positioning Gap

Southern Italy and the Calabria region currently offer:

- Limited international summer education programs
- Few residential enrichment experiences
- Minimal holistic or character-based educational offerings

At the European level:

- Demand for premium summer learning experiences is growing
- Parents increasingly seek:
 - English-language environments
 - Character development
 - Nature-based learning
 - Small cohort, high-attention programs

Vere Vitae combines:

- Mediterranean location
- Residential immersion
- Holistic curriculum
- International faculty

This positioning is **rare within Southern Europe**.

Growth Model: Boutique → Scalable

Phase 1

- 20–30 students
- One summer session
- Founder-led quality control

Phase 2

- Two sessions per summer
- 40–60 students in total

Phase 3 (optional)

- Replicable model
- Additional locations or partnerships
- Vere Vitae Academy methodology as a framework

The Academy is designed to begin as a **high-quality boutique experience**, with scalability possible after operational validation.

Contact Us & Learn More

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