

4. Volunteers

4.14 Investing in Volunteers

Investing in Volunteers is the UK quality standard for volunteer management. If your organisation involves volunteers, achieving the *Investing in Volunteers* standard will enable it to make the best use of your valuable people resource.

The Standard comprises nine indicators of volunteer management best practice, supported by 46 practices, based on four key areas of volunteer management:

- planning for volunteer involvement
- recruiting volunteers
- selecting and matching volunteers
- supporting and retaining volunteers

Investing in Volunteers is managed by the four development agencies of the UK Volunteering Forum: NCVO, Volunteer Scotland, Volunteer Now (Northern Ireland) and Wales Council for Voluntary Action.

Investing in Volunteers in Wales

Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) manages *Investing in Volunteers* in Wales. The standards, assessment and accreditation are the same for every organisation, wherever they are in the UK. There will be some differences in the way the standard is managed in each country.

To access *Investing in Volunteers* through WCVA your organisation needs to be based in Wales and have its registered address and head office based here.

There are three options for organisations interested in *Investing in Volunteers* in Wales.

Option 1: Downloading and using the Standard

For organisations wishing to use *Investing in Volunteers* as a framework and model for improving and developing their practices.

The standard can be downloaded free of charge, from the welcome page of the website www.investinginvolunteers.org.uk

At any time you may choose to proceed to register formally to proceed in working toward *Investing in Volunteers* assessment (option 2), or to undertake a Health Check (option 3).

Option 2: Achieving the Investing in Volunteers Award

For organisations wishing to achieve accredited status and achieve the *Investing in Volunteers* award.

You are required to register online, in order to gain access to all relevant parts of the website. Then follow the steps outlined below.

Step One: Getting Started.

Following online registration, you will be contacted by the IIV team who will discuss the whole process and agree with you the best way forward for your organisation.

An advisor/assessor will be appointed to work with you.

You will have access to guidance and resources to help you, on the website

Step Two: Health Check

An **assessor** undertakes the initial assessment of what is currently in place and what development is needed and sets this out clearly in a report for you.

Your **advisor** will then assist you in talking this forward.

Step Three: Development

Take the time you need to review and improve your good practice, drawing up your own development action plan as necessary. Your advisor is there for support and advice.

Gather together a portfolio of relevant evidence.

Step Four: Assessment

When you and your advisor feel that you are ready, an assessor will be appointed. They will receive your Health Check report, development plan and three selected pieces of evidence and will contact you to make arrangements for the assessment visit.

This will involve interviews with a sample of volunteers, staff and trustees.

After your assessment, you will receive oral feedback from the assessor telling you whether or not you have met the *Investing in Volunteers* standard. A written report will follow.

Step Five: Quality Assurance

The assessor's report is examined and verified first by a Lead Assessor- an experienced assessor within Wales.

The recommendation is then submitted to the UK Quality Assurance Panel which meets four times a year.

The Quality Assurance Panel endorses the assessor's decision and forwards the recommendation to the UK Volunteering Forum for approval. The award is valid from the date of the QA panel, for a three year period.

Step Six: Maintaining the Award

You will receive the *Investing in Volunteers* Award and be able to use the *Investing in Volunteers* logo on your letterheads and publications.

You will be notified in three years' time when it is due for renewal.

Option 3: The Investing in Volunteers Health Check

It may be that the *Investing in Volunteers* process is too much for your organisation in terms of cost and/or commitment of staff time.

You may choose to undertake an *Investing in Volunteers* Health Check and then to use this in your own way and at your own pace, without committing to working with an advisor towards achievement of the Standard.

You will have the opportunity to review how you wish to proceed, once the Health Check has been completed.

How much does it cost?

The cost of achieving *Investing in Volunteers* in Wales depends on the size and nature of the organisation.

The current costs, as from April 1st 2016 are:

Registration/Health Check costs:

- voluntary organisation £500
- statutory organisation £600 - £900

Assessment costs:

- voluntary organisations £1,000 - £2,000
- statutory organisations £1,600 - £2,700

Organisations undertaking the Health Check only, pay the Registration/Health Check cost only.

How do I get started?

1. Download the standard to see whether this is an appropriate benchmark for your organisation
2. Discuss *Investing in Volunteers* within your organisation, with trustees/committee members and with staff and volunteers. Consider whether you would like to aim to achieve the Standard, or just to undertake the Health Check at this stage. Make sure there is full support for your decision
3. Register online and speak to a member of the IIV team
4. An invoice for the registration fee will be sent, and once payment is received, you will be contacted by an *Investing in Volunteers* Advisor/Assessor.

What support is available?

Free resources:

- The Frequently Asked Questions section of the website may contain the answers you are looking for.
- You can also search the Working with Volunteers section of WCVA's website , www.wcva.org.uk/volunteering/working-with-volunteers which contains model policies, information sheets and advice and publications:
- The [Complete Volunteer Manager](#) – a web based guide to everything you need to know about volunteer management
- [Recruiting Volunteers – a manual of good practice](#) – a WCVA publication
- Your local [Volunteer Centre](#) can offer specific advice, for example on the development of appropriate policies and procedures

If you register for Investing in Volunteers:

- On registration, you can access the on-line *Investing in Volunteers* Good Practice library which contains a range of useful advice and information.
- If you wish, we may be able to put you in touch with a similar organisation that has achieved investing in Volunteers, for informal support

Training

Your local CVC may offer courses in volunteer management.

Check out the website www.coursesforcommunitiescymru.org.uk to find out what is available in your area.

Investing in Volunteers and Funding Questions

Many grant schemes, including Volunteering Wales grants and the BIG lottery, will consider funding the cost (or a proportion) of achieving *Investing in Volunteers*, as a relevant part of an application concerned with improving volunteering opportunities or experience.

Undertaking a Health Check would be considered evidence of attention to good practice and of seeking an external viewpoint, although no claim can be made about achieving the Investing in Volunteers Standard.

The liV team will be pleased to hear about any experiences of funding; for example if you have obtained funding to achieve the award, or if the award has been recognised in some way by funding bodies.

We will continue to lobby funders in Wales for greater recognition of the *Investing in Volunteers Award*.

For further information

Investing in Volunteers website
www.investinginvolunteers.org.uk
iiv@wcva.org.uk

Twitter #liVUK
Tel. 029 2043 1750

Disclaimer

The information provided in this sheet is intended for guidance only. It is not a substitute for professional advice and we cannot accept any responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.

For further information contact

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