

Swansea Council for Voluntary Service

Your local county voluntary council

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 this 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 being managed by the four development agencies of the UK Volunteering Forum: Volunteering England, Volunteer Development Scotland, Volunteer Now in 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.

From April 2011, 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, by clicking on the '*IIV Standard*' document link on 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 give you information on how to begin working towards *Investing in Volunteers*.

An advisor will be appointed to work with you and will arrange an introductory visit, to discuss the whole process and agree with you the best way forward for your organisation.

You will have access to all the information, guidance and template forms that you need on the website.

Step Two: Self assessment

Using the self assessment forms, you assess your organisation's practices against the nine indicators to see how they measure up. Your advisor will give you feedback on this and suggest areas for development.

Gather together a portfolio of evidence to support your self assessment.

Step Three: Development

You draw up a development plan outlining the steps you need to take to meet the standards.

Take the time you need to work through this. Your advisor is there for support and advice if necessary.

Step Four: Assessment

When you and your advisor feel that you are ready, an assessor will be appointed. They will receive your self assessment 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 an oral report 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.

The Health Check is carried out for you by a trained advisor. You will be given an outline development plan which identifies all you need to do in order to achieve the *Investing in Volunteers* Standard.

Organisations can choose to take things further if they wish and proceed to *Investing in Volunteers* Assessment.

Register online, as for Option 2, making it clear when you speak to the IIV team that you wish to undertake the Health Check option.

An Advisor will arrange to visit to carry out the Health Check.

How much does it cost?

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

From April 2011 the costs are:

Registration costs:

- voluntary organisation £250 – £350
- statutory organisation £500 - £700

Assessment costs:

- voluntary organisations £500 - £900

- statutory organisations £1800 - £2300

VAT is additional

WCVA member discount applies

Organisations undertaking the Health Check pay the registration cost only. If they then wish to proceed straight to assessment, the usual assessment charges apply. If more than six months has lapsed since the Health Check then an additional charge applies, for an advisor to assess readiness for assessment and advise on any pre-requisite action.

If there have been significant changes in staffing or organisational structures, additional advisor support may be recommended (at additional charge).

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. Decide whether it would be beneficial for you to register for the full *Investing in Volunteers* process, or to undertake the Health Check only 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.

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 Managing Volunteers section of WCVA's website , www.wcva.org.uk/volunteering which contains model policies, information sheets and advice.
- Your local Volunteer Centre can offer specific advice for example on the development of appropriate policies and procedures

Others – at cost:

- On registration, you can access the on-line *Investing in Volunteers* Good Practice library which contains a range of useful advice and information.
- The Complete Volunteer Manager – a web based guide to everything you need to know about volunteer management - £8 for WCVA members, £12 for non-members.

- Recruiting Volunteers – a manual of good practice – a WCVA publication £5 for WCVA members, £7.50 for others

WCVA publications can be ordered online at www.wcva.org.uk/publications, by e-mail iiv@wcva.org.uk or from WCVA Helpdesk 0800 2888 329.

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 in Wales, GwirVol, Millennium Volunteers, the BIG lottery, the cost (or a proportion) of achieving *Investing in Volunteers* would be considered as a relevant part of an application concerned with improving volunteering opportunities or experience.

For organisations applying for tenders through the Engagement Gateway scheme, achieving the *Investing in Volunteers* Award counts as two points in the Pre Qualification Questionnaire stage.

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

The IIV team will be pleased to hear about any experiences regarding 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

Tel. 029 2043 1730

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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