

Wales Council for Voluntary

Action

Supporting charities, volunteers and communities

4. Volunteers

4.2 Developing a volunteer strategy



You are considering bringing volunteers into your organisation or formalising volunteering within your organisation. This information sheet aims to take you through a process of structured thinking to enable you to construct a volunteer strategy.

Consider the questions below; meet with others and note your responses. These can be written up into a) statements, b) a plan or flow charts and c) time line which will help you prepare for volunteers and review your progress. Together this will result in your organisation / project's volunteering strategy. You may wish to speak to your local CVC Volunteering team for help with all this.

Questions to consider:

- Why do you want to involve volunteers / formalise volunteering. What will this add to your organisation?
- Do you feel that you can meet the [code of practice for involving volunteers](#)?
- What is the capacity of your organisation to support volunteers (in terms of time and resources)? What do you estimate to be the cost of involving volunteers, including recruitment, training, supervision and reimbursement of expenses? Are you considering looking for funding to develop volunteering? Who is/are the designated person(s) who will be confident and competent to train, support and supervise volunteers.
- Do staff understand and agree with the decision to involve volunteers? (See [“A charter for strengthening the relations between paid staff and volunteers” – WCVA & Wales TUC](#))
- Do service users and / or the community you serve understand the role and function of volunteers?
- Are funders aware, and supportive of volunteer involvement in ‘adding value’ to the activities and services of the organisation
- Do you need to devise or review your volunteer policy, other policies and procedures, ensuring that they are ‘fit for purpose’ for volunteers?
- What training and support is needed for the designated person/s who will train, recruit, supervise and support volunteers? Supporting volunteers should explicitly be part of the designated person/s job descriptions and staff supervision should include time to discuss the challenges and successes of managing volunteers.

- What will volunteers do? What will make these roles attractive to volunteers? Can you devise a range of roles that will appeal to a broad diversity of people? For example, think of short term as well as long term opportunities and general, easy access roles as well as more specific and challenging roles. Can you appeal to volunteers who have different motivations for volunteering? How might volunteers progress from one role to another as they acquire experience?
- How will volunteers make their voices heard, give feedback or voice a complaint, and be part of the team?
- Can you think of other ways to involve your volunteers and to capture their suggestions? For example, an annual review survey, participating in consultations and planning days or introducing a suggestions box.
- How will you evaluate the success of your volunteer programme?
- How will you recognise and reward the achievements of volunteers?

Role or task descriptions help define each role. Structuring a task description in the format below will also highlight what volunteer management procedures you need to have in place.

<i>Title</i>	this should clearly describe what the volunteer would be doing
<i>Purpose</i>	the context, how will the volunteer contribute to a broader overall aim
<i>Suggested activities</i>	main tasks which when undertaken will be effective in achieving the purpose
<i>Time scale</i>	how often, how regular, what days and times and if necessary length of commitment. (This would be important for example if the role was about building a relationship with a vulnerable service user)
<i>Site</i>	location and accessibility of volunteering site (and training / supervision)
<i>Supervision</i>	is there a regular pattern or an expectation concerning supervision. Give the name or a role of the person responsible for supervision
<i>Qualities</i>	skills, attitudes, knowledge that could be useful, any dress code or conduct requirements State whether there is an opportunity to use the Welsh language

<i>Benefits</i>	training provided, reimbursement of travel and other expenses, provision of references after stated time period of volunteering, recognition of volunteering such as Millennium Volunteers Award, thank you certificates, Volunteers' Week – <i>national recognition certificate</i> .
<i>Risks</i>	Highlight any key information that volunteers need to know, from your risk assessment of this role

Advertise volunteering opportunities on the www.volunteering-wales.net website, either by registering on the website as an organisation and uploading opportunities, bilingually, yourself, or by contacting your local volunteer centre who will upload them for you.

See a [summary of the process](#) of developing a volunteer strategy.

Further information

The [Investing in Volunteers standard](#) covers all aspects of volunteer involvement and is worth consulting when drawing up your volunteer strategy.

It requires, for example that a written policy or volunteer involvement is in place (Indicator 1.1) and that where the organisation has policies for staff, volunteers should have their own equivalent policy or, where appropriate, be included in general policies. It requires that a 'description is drawn up for each role (Indicator 4.1) and that an assessment of risk to volunteers is conducted when designing volunteer roles (Indicator 5.1)

Many of the WCVA/CVC Information sheets are relevant, in particular:

- 4.3 [Creating a volunteer policy](#)
- 4.4 [Recruiting, selecting and inducting volunteers](#)
- 4.7 [How to ensure volunteer satisfaction](#)
- 4.8 [Keeping volunteers safe](#)
- 4.13 [Volunteer expenses](#)
- 4.26 [Managing Concerns relating to volunteers](#)

An [example role description](#) is available in English and in Welsh.

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.

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