

SUBMISSION following
Call for Input (CFI) on Key Aspects to be included in a
National Volunteering Strategy
(The closing date for submissions is Thursday, 14 February 2019.)

Organisation/Individual: Monaghan Public Participation Network. Monaghan PPN held a collaborative consultation workshop with Monaghan Volunteer Centre. At this workshop we did not focus on all 44 questions, but the ones we felt were most relevant to each organisation.

On the evening, we held the consultation we had to reduce the number of questions we had planned to ask due to extreme bad weather conditions in the interest of safety for everyone to get home earlier and safely.

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All materials received by the Department will be subject to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act. This means that all materials submitted during the CFI could be released to a wider audience on request. If you wish to claim exemption from the Act please state this case in your submission along with the justification for so doing.

SUBMISSION

Call for Input (CFI) on Key Aspects to be included in a National Volunteering Strategy

	Section 4: Definition of Volunteering
1	Should we adopt the White Paper definition or the European Union definition of volunteering? Is there a more appropriate definition which could be considered for the purpose of the strategy?
	The majority of attendees at consultation workshop favoured the White Paper definition.

	Section 5: Background on Irish Volunteering
2	Do you agree with the outline of the Department's role in volunteering? What additions or amendments would you suggest?
	The word achieving should be added to read Our mission is to "promote rural and community development and to support achieving vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland in partnership with community ".

	Section 6: A Vision for the Future of Irish Volunteering
3	Do you agree with this vision for the purposes of this strategy? If not, what should our vision be?
	Yes agreed.

	Section 7: Objectives of a Volunteering Strategy
4	What objectives for Irish volunteering should be set for the purposes of this strategy?
	A number of suggestions were put forward: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nationwide Increase in number of individuals/organisations volunteering• More public awareness of benefits of volunteering• Increase in number of businesses who have volunteer programmes• Programmes to encourage young people to volunteer• Standardised training for volunteers

	Section 8: The Volunteering Community
5	What is the role of the public in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?
6	What is the role of the VIOs in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?

7	Should the role of volunteer supporting infrastructure be expanded for the purposes of this strategy?
8	Is the current model adequate? If not, what volunteering infrastructure and funding model would best support the development of volunteering?
9	How can Volunteer Centres, Volunteer Ireland and PPNs work together to develop volunteering, active citizenship and participation in the community?
	<p>PPN's were established in 2014 as part of Local Government Reform to ensure public participation and active citizenship are at the core of work of local government decision making. The role of Monaghan Volunteer Centre is to promote the value of volunteering and increase the range and quality of volunteering in Monaghan. Both organisations have very distinct roles.</p> <p>Monaghan PPN agree that there should be some form of collaborative approach to work with Volunteer Centres. However, the PPN believes that this should only take place where it makes sense e.g working together on a workshop for this strategy.</p> <p>Both organisations could benefit from inviting the other organisation to speak/present/network at some of their events.</p> <p>An audit of individuals/groups would help establish the need and findings of same would help deliver a forward plan.</p>
10	How can the Department facilitate co-operation between Volunteer Centres, Volunteer Ireland and the PPNs?
	DRCD could provide increased resources for specific collaborative projects
11	Are there other areas of research that could be included?
12	What is the role of local authorities in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?
	<p>Full support from local government will play a key role in the success of the delivery of the strategy. Monaghan County Council has always acknowledged the role volunteers play at local level. The annual County Council awards pay tribute to volunteers from across the County.</p> <p>A dedicated team in Community Development are currently working on Community Planning projects in collaboration with community groups and volunteers in specific areas. The vision is that each town/village will have its own community plan by end of 2020. This plan will be developed in collaboration with communities following needs analysis studies and consultation. The vision for this is that when large funding opportunities becomes available, community volunteers will have the tools and resources to apply for funding and basically be shovel ready to lead these initiatives. Monaghan PPN believe that local government is in a position to provide the resources to empower communities to help themselves.</p>
13	What is the role of central Government (outside the Department of Rural and Community Development) in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A multi departmental approach to supporting work of Volunteer centres and volunteers will mean there will be a unified recognition of work volunteers play on a daily basis across the country.
14	How could the Department further facilitate engagement between the business sector and volunteering?
	Corporate organisations to invite Volunteer Ireland to inform them about their Corporate Volunteering Programme.
15	What steps can the Department and other stakeholders take to enhance engagement with European and international partners in volunteering?
16	What other relevant stakeholders, if any, should be considered in developing a volunteering strategy to support volunteering in Ireland?

	Section 9: Governance and Funding
17	Do you agree with the approach outlined above? If not, please provide reasons.
18	Do you agree with the approach outlined above? If not, please provide reasons.

	Section 10: Challenges to Volunteering
19	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National publicity campaign outlining key statistics such as publishing of any research documents that can give information on benefits of volunteering to physical and mental well being • Publish case studies of peoples volunteering experiences • Publish statistics of benefits of volunteering to mental and physical well being • Increase in funding opportunities for volunteer organisations to go out to communities to recruit new volunteers • Acknowledge role volunteers play by posting a clear statement of appreciation on website/publications/social media pages
20	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to raise awareness of volunteering opportunities?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide more financial support to volunteer centres to enable them proactively reach out to community groups to establish volunteer opportunities • National promotional campaign to encourage people to get involved in volunteering

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional trainers recruited to train trainers (Train The Trainer) model
21	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage general participation in volunteering?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get Involved campaigns in every County • More publicity at local level around volunteering opportunities • More opportunities for new communities and migrants to participate • PPN's can help build capacity of community organisations to help themselves to give them confidence to go to people in their community and offer help • Tax credit relief for volunteers
22	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage the participation of young people in volunteering?
	<p>The Comhairle members recommended the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising on social media platforms and in education systems by getting schools involved in the volunteering system • I feel like if they reached out to Irish influencers they would be able to get the word out to young people and encourage them • They should provide opportunities to young people involved in the organisation which gives them a good experience of it and encourages them to become a volunteer. • Young volunteers should receive adequate training courses to volunteer in certain services.
23	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage the participation of marginalised groups in volunteering?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Migrant Strategy that each local authority will implement will mean that PPNs will play a key role in ensuring representation of migrant communities on all decision making committees in the local authority. Each PPN will be tasked with developing a Migrant Integration Forum which will form part of the PPN network. • Government departments at national and local level have a key role to play in ensuring that volunteer centres have access to marginalised groups. • Plain English documentation
24	Should the strategy seek to focus on or identify particular marginalised group(s) to encourage their participation in volunteering?
	All key identified social inclusion target groups should be focused on
25	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to mitigate the risks posed by the changing demographic of volunteers?
26	What specific audiences should the national volunteering strategy focus on?

27	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage training and development opportunities for volunteers?
	More resources could be provided to ensure all volunteers are up to date on Health and Safety, Manual Handling, First Aid, GDPR etc Encourage groups to establish their training needs and then develop a training plan for that groups Resources should then be provided to help groups receive their training
28	In what other ways can the Department support enhanced volunteer performance in Irish volunteering?
29	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage training and development opportunities for volunteer managers?
	Needs analysis to determine training needs. Skills should then be matched to meet volunteer demands. Increased resources needs to be provided to ensure training is available. A support pack should be provided to ensure all managers are aware of mandatory training such as child protection, governance, garda vetting, data protection etc
30	What steps may be taken by the Department to support enhanced management performance in Irish volunteering?
31	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to address the perception of volunteering involving too large a commitment of time?
	Use case studies from a broad range of volunteer roles
32	Should a volunteering code of conduct for volunteers and volunteer involving organisations (VIOs) be developed and implemented? What should this code include?
	Yes. Should include mentoring as part of training programme. Proper training for volunteers in caring environment with induction training at beginning. A template should be made available that could be adopted for any group.
33	Should a potential Irish code of conduct for volunteers and VIOs be mandatory or optional? Who would regulate it?
34	What particular challenges are facing smaller volunteer involving organisations and how can the Department assist?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance • Administrative Overload • GDPR • Time • Childcare • Transport • Increase opportunities for new communities/migrants to get involved • Lack of young people getting involved

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National promotional campaign to encourage people to get involved • More resources to fulfil demands • More support form statutory agencies • National Insurance scheme • Accredited recognition to show value for what volunteers do
35	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to facilitate QQI assessment of volunteers for the purposes of accrediting skills?
36	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage the creation of volunteering opportunities?
	<p>Needs analysis and skill matching</p> <p>Encourage business sector to support staff to participate on voluntary activities</p> <p>Business sector could link in with volunteer centres and promote volunteer opportunities in the organisation</p>
37	What other significant challenges to volunteering should be considered as part of this strategy? How can they be addressed?
38	Are there any further challenges, strategic objectives and actions that you feel should be included in a national volunteering strategy?

	Section 11: Monitoring, Measuring and Evaluating the Impact of Volunteering
39	What criteria should be used to assess our progress in assessing the impacts of volunteering?
	<p>Key Performance Indicators – increase in number of people volunteering</p> <p>Increase in number of businesses encouraging staff to volunteer</p> <p>Increase in number of volunteering opportunities</p>
40	What criteria should be used to gauge success in delivery of the National Volunteering Strategy?
	Key Performance Indicators would be an effective way to measure success. An annual report should be published documenting key activities which would be an effective way to measure performance.

	Section 12: Proposed National Advisory Group on Volunteering
41	Do you agree that a National Advisory Group is the most suitable vehicle to drive this strategy forward?
	Monaghan Public Participation Network agree with this.

42	Who should participate in a National Advisory Group?
	All key stakeholders (statutory, private, community and voluntary organisations and public) should be represented. Public Participation Networks and Volunteer Centres should be invited to make nominations for representation from existing regional networks.
43	How broad should the terms of reference (TOR) be for the proposed Advisory Group or other mechanism found suitable to drive this strategy forward?
44	Does any better mechanism exist to drive this strategy forward?