

#YouthVIP



Scottish Government
Riaghaidh na h-Alba
gov.scot



#YouthVIP Toolkit:

Including Young Volunteers

Disclaimer: This information is freely given on behalf of #YouthVIP, however we do not accept any responsibility or liability for any of the information given and used.

The information provided is to solely act as a guide for organisations accepting young volunteers.

With thanks to: YouthVIP Legacy Group, YouthLink Scotland, YoungScot and the TSI Network

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 Introduction

02 Why Include Young
Volunteers

03 Getting Ready

09 Developing Roles

11 Recruitment

12 Training

13 Support and
Development

14 Resources

17 Best Practice Guidance



Introduction

Hello!

Perhaps you have attended the Get the Gen #YouthVIP training and are excited and ready to start getting young people involved. You can see the guidance that accompanies the training at [Get the Gen](#).

Maybe you are looking to make your volunteering pool more inclusive and diverse. Involving young volunteers is a great place to begin.

Even though there is a lot of information out there about volunteering it can sometimes be difficult to know where to start. We have developed this toolkit to provide practical support and guidance for groups and organisations to include young volunteers. In this toolkit we connect to best practice to ensure that the young volunteers you involve have a great experience.

We'll cover all aspects of the volunteer journey, from insurance to training to ongoing support. We'll also include lots of links to great information already available online. We hope that you find this document helpful and that you will feel more confident in supporting young volunteers!

This toolkit has been developed as part of the Youth Volunteering Innovation Project. (YouthVIP). The aim of the toolkit is to support Volunteer Involving Organisations, (VIOs) to break down barriers and misconceptions surrounding the practical delivery of youth volunteering opportunities as part of a inclusive volunteering program. Whilst YouthVIP represents young people aged between 13 and 25 years old, the guidance offered in this document is largely directed towards involving under 18s.

Why include young volunteers

Including young people can not only benefit the young people, but groups/organisations and the wider community.

Young people bring a unique and fresh perspective to organisations, alongside their energy, new skills, and enthusiasm. Volunteering can play a key role in their education and future employment. Introducing young people to work environments earlier has a direct impact on their later confidence, skills and ability to move into employment.

Young people can also bring unique skills to their volunteering role and support your group to become adaptable and resilient.

By including young volunteers, organisations are also supporting the development of life long volunteering habits across Scotland, creating social responsibility.

Including young people and the law

It is useful to be aware of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, This is important for anyone working with children and young people

In particular Article 12, which advocates for children and young people's right to participate and take part in decision making.

The YouthVIP Consortium aim to support groups/organisations to ensure children and young people can contribute meaningfully to their societies as active citizens, including the development and direction of the group/organisation they are part of while volunteering.



Getting ready

Before involving young volunteers it is important to ensure you have the necessary supports in place, this is necessary for volunteers of all ages to ensure their volunteering experience with your group/organisations is safe, meaningful and most of all fun!

Insurance

All volunteer involving organisations need to cover all their volunteers with employers' liability insurance (covering your liability for injury or disease suffered by volunteers, during their volunteering role). Insurance should not be a barrier to involving young people as volunteers.

Here are a few steps to take to open the discussion and clarify the situation: Check your insurance policies, make sure that children/young people are detailed if they are undertaking a volunteering activity. It is rare that insurance companies will discriminate against young volunteers, however if there is no mention of young people in your documents, reach out to your insurance provider and have that discussion.

A few words of guidance from an Edgar Flaherty, an insurance broker with Arthur J. Gallagher, Business Insurance, Risk Management & Consultancy

'Project organisers, volunteers and activities should be covered by comprehensive insurance cover. Insurance cover should be in place for volunteering activities that have documented risk assessments that are updated on a regular basis. Insurance should include Public Liability insurance, which responds to allegations of negligence leading to bodily injury. There are no age limits under this insurance, but if you are working with young people, you should be aware that the group/organisation has an enhanced duty of care, and this should be considered when deciding what activities are safe and appropriate.

Insurance cover will vary depending on provider, but many include any equipment provided or purchased by the group/organisation in use by volunteers during their volunteering activities.

Most insurance does not cover personal property or equipment belonging to volunteers.

Your insurer should be advised of any changes to the roles and activities of volunteers in order to consider ongoing cover.'



Health and safety

All volunteers should have a safe volunteer experience.

Organisations involving volunteers should have an up-to-date health and safety policy. Health and Safety legislation, responsibilities and requirements must be observed and made known to all staff and volunteers.

Volunteer Edinburgh worked with partners to create a fantastic online resource called Volunteer Wiki. This provides reliable up to date information for volunteer managers including template policies and procedures. This includes what to consider when developing a health and safety policy.

Risk Assessment

Related to insurance and health and safety are risk assessments. Risk assessments help you to evaluate the risk certain hazards pose and what you can do to mitigate these risks. Risk assessments will be required to inform all volunteer activities, not just those of young volunteers.

Points to focus on while carrying out the risk assessment are:

- Always assess risks for volunteers before they start volunteering
- Take account of the layout of the workplace and the environment in which they will volunteer
- Take account of the nature of any physical, biological and chemical agents they will be exposed to, length of exposure and to what extent
- Assess what types of equipment will be used and how this will be handled
- Ensure your risk assessment considers the young volunteers' levels of psychological or physical maturity, experience, also consider their awareness of existing or potential risks
- Introduce control measures to eliminate or minimise these risks, so far as is reasonably possible
- Identify a suitable age for the role as well as the appropriate level of oversight/supervision that is required

If a significant risk remains despite your best efforts to do what is reasonably practicable to control it, you must not engage the young person in this volunteering role.

The Health and Safety Executive have information about including volunteers in risk assessments and example forms.

Safeguarding

The NSPCC defines safeguarding as “the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.” Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment. Preventing harm to children’s health or development. Ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care.

To ensure that your organisation is prepared to work with under 18s it is important to have a safeguarding policy. The [NSPCC](#) have detailed guidance on how to create a Safeguarding policy, including a draft template.

[*Volunteer Wiki also has draft safeguarding policies.](#)

PVG Scheme Membership

The [Protecting Vulnerable Groups \(PVG\)](#) membership scheme is a Scottish Government Scheme managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland. It helps ensure only people suitable to work with children and protected adults can do 'regulated work' with these vulnerable groups. It is important to remember that having a previous conviction does not necessarily mean that someone is unfit to carry out a volunteering role. As Volunteer Managers we must be confident in our ability to assess risk and carry out robust risk assessments when a prospective volunteer discloses previous criminal convictions.

Young volunteers 13 years to 16 years

There is no legal age restriction on PVG Scheme membership, however it is advisable that no young volunteer under the age of 16 years have the responsibility of a regulated role. If they are carrying out tasks associated with a regulated role, they should always be supervised.

[*Safeguarding is wider than children and young people and also covers at risk adults. For the purpose of this toolkit the focus is children and young people.](#)



PVG Scheme Membership cont.

Staff/volunteer supporting young volunteers

The adult (staff or volunteer) providing supervision to the young volunteer may be in a 'regulated work' role and should therefore be a PVG Scheme member. Staff supporting 16- and 17-year-old volunteers do not need to be PVG Scheme members.

In volunteer management regulated activity is “teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising a child who is under the age of 16 in relation to their 'volunteering' for “more than 3 days in any 30-day period”

Adults who do not have a PVG scheme membership should not be left responsible for a volunteer under the age of 16. In addition to having PVG scheme membership, adults supervising young volunteers should be familiar with good safeguarding practice and the organisation or group's safeguarding policy and reporting procedure.

You can learn more about the PVG Scheme from the [Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services Team](#)

Emergency Contact Information

It is good practice to obtain emergency contact information for anyone undertaking a volunteering activity.



Parent/Carer Consent

Parental permission helps to ensure that the young volunteer's parent/ carer understands what your organisation does, what the young volunteer will be doing, when and where they will be volunteering and that they consent to this.

Things to consider:

- Get consent from parents or carers for volunteers aged under 16 by asking them to sign a written consent form (unless a young person's volunteer activities are within school hours as part of a flexible timetable. The school are then responsible for the young person during these hours and will have separate permission procedures).
- Ensure parent/carer/guardian are aware of your safeguarding policy and procedures in relation to 16 and 17-year-olds
- Although a young person has agreed to their volunteering involvement, there may be specific activities that they or their parents feel uncomfortable about the young person taking part in. It is important to discuss what alternative arrangements could be arranged.
- You may need separate consent for specific activities, for example overnight trip or if the volunteer will be carrying out tasks away from the premises where they normally volunteer, then additional permission should be sought.
- Although, in most cases parents have a legal responsibility for their child up to the age of 18 you should consider the 16- to 17-year-old volunteer's personal circumstances and whether it is appropriate or necessary to obtain parental consent. e.g. a 17 year old student volunteer living in student accommodation away from home does not require parental consent to volunteer. On the other hand, you should consider parental consent for a 16-year-old volunteer still living in the family home. In this case the consideration is to make sure that the parents are aware of the volunteering and what it involves.
- If a young person is over 16 and is living independently of parents or social services they are able to provide their own consent.
- When taking photos of young volunteers for publicity purposes you must obtain their permission and, if they are under 16, the permission of their parent/ guardian to use any of the images taken

You can see an example consent form from the [NSPCC](#)

Expenses

When involving young volunteers, indeed any volunteers, it is good practice to reimburse all out of pocket expenses incurred by the volunteer in the course of their volunteering. The most common expense is travel to and from the volunteering opportunity.

Key points to consider:

- Under 22s' now have access to free bus travel.
- Only reimburse volunteers for expenses actually incurred during their volunteering, receipts should be provided by the volunteer.
- Ensure that you keep good records of expense payments

Reasonable expenses to reimburse include:

- Travel to and from the place of volunteering
- Travel undertaken in the course of volunteering
- Food and refreshments while volunteering
- Postage, telephone calls etc.
- Materials purchased to carry out the volunteering role (e.g. paper, pens etc.)
- Cost of equipment, protective clothing etc. (ideally these should be provided by the organisation)
- Attendance at training events and courses relevant to their volunteering

Other Expenses

Other possible expenses to consider are Childcare (crèche or child minding) or other caring expenses. There are often funding channels that can be accessed through local authority or DWP. Groups/organisations can find out what is available in their local area and signpost to this support.

It is also important to recognise that many small or unconstituted groups may not be in a position to reimburse expenses, in this scenario, expectation must be clearly managed and this information should be share upfront with potential volunteers.

Volunteer Scotland have a template expenses form.



Developing roles

When developing volunteer roles, it is important to make sure that it is appropriate to the interests and capabilities of the individual.

New volunteer roles do not necessarily need to be created specifically for young people. However, as with any volunteer, you will want to have a conversation to see if your role can be adapted to suits their interests and needs. This is also an opportunity to be mindful of appropriate asks in relation to considerations such as cultural or religious tenets e.g., in some cultures it may not be appropriate for a young woman to volunteer in a mixed gender group, or a volunteer of a particular faith may require breaks or space for prayer.

When considering volunteering roles filled by children or young people you need to think about:

- What tasks will be carried out
- The circumstance in which these tasks are taking place

There are also different ways that you can involve young volunteers. For example:

- In pairs/with a friend: Volunteering with a friend can be a great way for a young person to feel more confident participating as a volunteer.
- With their family: Create opportunities for children and young people to get involved alongside their parents. In this instance the parents remain responsible for their children.
- Group-working with an external established group: Create an event or opportunity and invite other established groups of young people to take part (e.g. schools/Scouts/Girl Guides/church/Duke of Edinburgh/youth club).
- Create your own group: This requires your organisation take full responsibility for creating and promoting the activity, supervising children and young volunteers while they are on site carrying out their volunteering roles. Your staff would be responsible for the children and young volunteers while undertaking the activity and would be responsible for their support and supervision.
- Youth Boards: Organisations can consider supporting young trustees (legally need to be over 18) or having a separate youth board, which can offer a youth voice and feed into the board).

Unsuitable roles for young volunteers

Here are some variables that make roles unsuitable for young volunteers (note that some of these variables make volunteering unsuitable for any age group of volunteers):

- The physical or psychological capacity needed to carry out the role exceeds the young volunteers age group.
- The role exposes the young volunteer to substances chronically harmful to human health
- The role involves a risk of accident that the young volunteer is unlikely to recognise due to e.g. lack of experience or training or sufficient attention to safety
- The role involves a risk to the young volunteer's health from extreme heat, noise or vibration
- Young volunteers under 16 years of age cannot take part in house-to-house fundraising collections on their own

Creating a role description

When developing a role description, you will want to include all the same things you would normally on a volunteer role profile. This could include:

- Role title
- Time commitment
- Where the role will be based
- Any particular skills or interests. This one is particularly relevant to young people. List things like 'enthusiastic' or 'likes to work as part of a team', rather than professional skills that a young person would not have had a chance to gain. Consider whether you can train a young person to be able to carry out this role?
- Development or training
- Whether they can volunteer individually or with a friend or as a group
- What will a young volunteer get out of their volunteer experience
- If expenses will be reimbursed
- Any other detail a potential volunteer would find helpful to know

Recruitment

Now you have planned and prepared for the role, you will want to consider how to recruit your volunteers. How you engage volunteers already will be helpful. You might also want to think about where you promote volunteer opportunities. Your local [Third Sector Interface](#) will be able to help you promote your opportunities. It is also important to make it clear that this role is suitable for a certain age groups.

When looking to involve young people you will want to promote the role in places where young people are spending their time, either on or offline.

Sometimes you might find that more people express interest in your role that your organisation can accommodate. In this case you might want to refer guidance from [NCVO](#) about selecting the right person or people. Remember when involving young people, you might want to think about criteria that is not related to previous work experience or qualifications. It can be useful to think about their potential and how they can be supported to thrive as a volunteer with you.

[Volunteer Scotland](#) has some guidance on how to match the right volunteer to the right role and here some [great guidance on how to use social media to promote your opportunities](#).



Training

Induction and training are vital for everyone involved in your group/organisation, young volunteers are no different. When volunteers are welcomed to the organisation and their volunteering role they should receive induction and training which includes a warm welcome and introductions, health and safety, policies and procedures, training and guidance.

Young volunteers should receive appropriate training to carry out their volunteering role and enhance their knowledge, provide them with opportunities to use their skills. Often this will be 'on the job' training provided by the person supporting them in their role. There may also be more formal training sessions to attend e.g., food hygiene session. Free training on more wider topics, can be found online or through other organisations and can be made available to volunteers to support them in their ongoing development.

Young volunteers also require training and instruction on the hazards and risks present in the workplace, and preventive and control measures put in place to protect their health and safety. This training should include a basic introduction to health and safety, e.g. first aid, fire and evacuation procedures, safeguarding – who to go to if concerns arise, professional relationships, equal opportunities and diversity.



Support and development

Any volunteer should have someone who oversees their volunteering, offers advice, information, and support. They should understand the volunteering role and be able to intervene in the event of issues. This person or people may require PVG Scheme membership. It is best practice that any staff member or volunteer supporting young volunteers have experience of working with young people and receive the necessary safeguarding training.

Well supported volunteers feel part of the team, know their contribution is valued and their volunteering experience will prove beneficial to both parties.

Volunteering is an important step in a young person's life journey and as such the support offered needs to consider any future aspirations or plans. The support offered by a group/organisation should help the volunteer look to the future, this can include helping them work towards goals, developing specific skill sets, provide references, recognising contributions through official schemes e.g., The [Saltire Awards](#) or local third sector initiatives.

Organisations should be able to offer a consistent level of supervision to maintain a safe and enjoyable volunteer experience for young people. Some young volunteers may need a lot of support, while others may be more confident and require less.

Support comes in many forms; it needs to be appropriate to the demands of the role and the individual's need. It is valuable to have regular, scheduled time with your volunteers to support them with their development, build relationships and offer feedback.

Check out [Get the Gen](#) supporting the development of a multi-generational workforce across the sector. As part of YouthVIP offering Scottish Government funded training - learn how to make your organisation more young people friendly.

[Volunteer Scotland's](#) detailed guidance on supporting volunteers.

Celebrating

Recognising a volunteer's impact is an important part of them having a valuable volunteer experience. Remember to take the time to thank your volunteers and celebrate their contributions.

Ask them how they would like to celebrate and be celebrated.



Consortium partner resources

All 3 #YouthVIP Consortium partner organisations offer a host of resources on their individual websites that can offer valuable information, guidance and assets that can be drawn on by groups/organisations wishing to increase their understanding of youth engagement through volunteering.

Partner logos are links to websites



[ProjectScotland](#) part of the [Volunteering Matters](#) family.
We help young people to get on in life through volunteering



[Young Scot Corporate](#) - [Young Scot](#) - [Young People](#)
The national youth information and citizenship charity for 11-26 year olds in Scotland



[YouthLink Scotland](#) - The national agency for youth work and the Scottish Lead on the [#iwill](#) movement.

Wider organisations/partner resources

Wider voluntary sector resources:



The TSI Scotland Network is a body of charities that support the third sector across Scotland. There are 32 TSIs – or Third Sector Interfaces in Scotland, one for each local authority area. Some are partnerships working across large urban and geographical areas, some combine all the functions of the TSIs' work under one roof.



Volunteer Scotland Exist to help you make a difference through volunteering. Scotland, more than ever, needs us all to share in the nation's common good. The potential to bring out the best in us has never been better and Volunteer Scotland can support you to achieve this.



The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) is the national membership organisation for the voluntary sector. Their mission is to support, promote and develop a confident, sustainable voluntary sector in Scotland.



NCVO Exists to champion charities and volunteers. The compassionate people across our communities who make daily differences. NCVO supports the collective impact being made across the country. Building stronger communities. For everyone. Everywhere.

Youth specific resources

Youth specific resources:



The Saltire Awards are the Scottish Government's way of celebrating, recognising and rewarding the commitment, contribution and achievements of young volunteers in Scotland.



Developing the
Young Workforce

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) aims to prepare learners for their future pathways and the transition into the world of work.



The Young Person's Guarantee is a commitment to bring together employers, partners and young people. It aims to connect every 16 to 24 year old in Scotland to an opportunity.



Power of Youth Charter - For a better tomorrow, we must empower young people today!



#iwill - Young people aren't just the leaders of tomorrow. They have the energy, skills and ideas to improve society and our environment today. Now, more than ever, we need to grow the Power of Youth.

Ensuring quality in your volunteering practice

Volunteer Scotland - Scotland's Volunteering Quality Pipeline



A Volunteer Charter - Principles for Assuring Legitimacy and Preventing Exploitation of Workers and Volunteers. The Charter sets out key principles which help to underpin good relations in a volunteering environment



The Volunteer Friendly Award is a user-friendly quality standard to support, recognise and reward groups who are good at involving volunteers.



Investing in Volunteers (IiV) is the UK quality standard for good practice in volunteer management. If you want to assess the quality of your volunteer management and involvement, prove and improve the effectiveness of your work with volunteers, and enhance your organisation's reputation.



IiV Essentials is a free online tool designed especially for volunteer-involving groups and organisations. It was developed nationally and is supported by NCO, Volunteer Now, Volunteer Scotland and WCVA.

The consortium partners



PROJECTSCOTLAND

part of



Volunteering Matters is a registered charity in England and Wales no. 291222 and in Scotland no. SC039171.

Volunteering Matters is a company limited by guarantee no. 1435877.



Scottish registered charity SC029757 and is a company limited by guarantee 202687



Scottish Charity No. SC003923