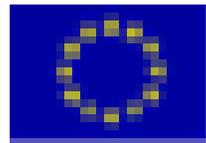


**Institute for
Volunteering
Research**

The AVE project in the UK

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An initiative of

**Volunteering
England**

in association with

UeL
University of
East London

Skills development in the UK

- There is great deal of interest in skills development in the UK
- There are development to ensure all adults are skilled to a certain standard
- But there is also acknowledgement that this development will need to be achieved through a variety of measures
- There is also a growing interest in lifelong learning

Volunteering in the UK

- **The UK has a rich tradition in volunteering and statistics indicate that almost 50% of the adult population is involved in voluntary work at some point (in the year).**
- **Volunteering is also being recognised by policy-makers as a way to engage people in communities, and at the same time, to provide training and development**
- **Volunteering is becoming increasingly professionalised and formalised – volunteers are ‘managed’**

Interest in AVE

- **It is within this context that AVE is answering a need**
- **Volunteers want to be developed**
- **Managers want to manage better**
- **Policy-makers want to make the link between volunteering and employability**
- **There is a demand for a tool to help connect volunteering with employability**

The tool in the UK

- **The tool was developed and then piloted with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew Gardens**
 - **Botanical gardens in Kew, Surrey**
 - **Involve volunteers in variety of ways**
 - **Successful ongoing pilot with 5 horticulture volunteers**

Findings from the pilot

- **Feedback from the organisation:**
 - **Valued the tool as a new way to motivate volunteers and help people who are seeking eventual employment**
 - **Good way to check on volunteers' progress and to see how to develop the placement**
 - **Useful for volunteers building careers or those who need 'evidence' file, but also for those not seeking employment for health reasons, it can help steer the course of placement**

“The AVE tool provides the means to help focus both volunteers and co-ordinators on needs and development...I am already impressed with the motivational effect it has had on volunteers”

- Volunteer Co-ordinator

Piloting the Tool: Interim findings

- **Feedback from volunteers:**
 - **Process of reflection helped volunteers realise what they had got from volunteering**
 - **Useful in identifying specific skills they had developed and in seeing the areas where they hadn't developed as much as they would like**
 - **The mind map helped them think of examples / evidence for each skill**
 - **Appreciated the information and signposting to more formal accreditation**
 - **Action plan was useful, felt they had set achievable targets, but needed quite a lot of help with this stage**

“I found it inspiring – it made me think that’s possible for me”

-Volunteer

“It’s useful because I find it really hard to remember what I’ve done as a volunteer”

- Volunteer

Producing and distributing the tool

- **The tool for the UK should be web-based for ease of distribution**
- **The portfolio and the guide will be integrated**
- **There has been a steady flow of enquiries so far**
- **Dissemination through the membership of Volunteering England**
- **A workshop has been run at the European Volunteer Convention in 2005**
- **An article has been produced for Volunteering Magazine**
- **A paper for the journal Voluntary Action will be written.**