

## Assessing Voluntary Experiences (AVE)

### Questionnaire to Organisations Involving Volunteers



The Institute for Volunteering Research is working on a European project, along with a number of our European partners in France, Austria, Germany, Hungary, Italy and Poland, exploring the ways in which the voluntary experience is assessed. The project is funded as part of the Leonardo da Vinci scheme. It runs from 2003-2006.

The aim of the AVE project is to:

- Generate a statement on the recognition of voluntary work in each participating country;
- Undertake a consultation with organisations and associations in each county to explore ways in which voluntary experiences are assessed;
- Produce a synthesis of the main skills and qualifications developed through voluntary activities, and the ways in which these skills are identified and assessed;
- Develop a proposal for a new tool/method to assess voluntary experiences;
- Pilot the new voluntary experience assessment tool.

This questionnaire will feed into the project by exploring the extent to which organisations in England currently perceive and assess the voluntary experience in their organisation.

We would be very grateful if you would take the time to complete this form and so feed into this important piece of research.

The results from England will be put together with those from our European partners on a website:

[www.eEuropeassociations.net](http://www.eEuropeassociations.net)

Thank you.

Name of your organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation acronym (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Town/City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section One: Volunteering at your organisation

**Q1 How many volunteers do you currently involve within your organisation?**

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> None – please return questionnaire | <input type="checkbox"/> 10-49 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2                                | <input type="checkbox"/> 50-99 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3-9                                | <input type="checkbox"/> >100  |

**Q2 What proportion of your organisations volunteers are under the age of 30 years?**

- None                       1-30%                       30-60%                       Over 60%

**Q3 What proportion of your organisations volunteers are women?**

- None                       1-30%                       30-60%                       Over 60%

**Q4 What proportion of your organisations volunteers are retired?**

- None                       1-30%                       30-60%                       Over 60%

**Q5 When recruiting new volunteers, do you currently use any of the following selection procedures? (Please tick all that apply)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> We don't have any procedures for selecting volunteers | <input type="checkbox"/> Induction day / open day               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interviews  | <input type="checkbox"/> Done through a volunteer bureau/centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Application form                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)_____            |

**Q6 Do you currently have any requirements that potential new volunteers must meet in order to volunteer in your organisation? (Please tick all that apply)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of a minimum contribution of time | <input type="checkbox"/> Previous relevant experience                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gender   | <input type="checkbox"/> Willingness to complete a specific training course      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lower age limit                                | <input type="checkbox"/> A commitment to the aims and values of the organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upper age limit                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Higher education qualification                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)_____                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious belief                               |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to speak a second language             |  |

**Q7 What activities are undertaken by volunteers in your organisation? (Please tick all that apply)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participation on boards/management committees/councils | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing a non-direct service to people |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helping to run/organise activities or events           | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing a direct service to people     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative/secretarial/office tasks                | <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting or befriending people           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Giving advice/information/counselling                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing transport/driving              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Campaigning  | <input type="checkbox"/> Raising or handling money                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Providing information                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Giving other practical help              |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)_____              |

**Q8 Do volunteers currently have the opportunity to get involved in decision making in your organisation?**

- Yes **Please go to Q9**
- No **Please go to Q10**

**Q9 If yes, how?**

- Sitting on management committees
- Planning the year's work
- Planing individual projects or events
- Setting targets for our work
- Evaluating the outcomes of our work
- Developing the volunteer programme
- Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

**Section Two: Training for volunteers**

**Q10 During the last two years, have you provided your volunteers with any formal training?**

- Yes, we provided in-house training **Please go to Q11**
- Yes, we used external trainers **Please go to Q11**
- No **Please go to Q14**

**Q11 Which topics have been covered in the training?  
(Please tick the three which have delivered most frequently)**

- General induction to the organisation
- Training on the mission, goals and values of the organisation
- Awareness raising training on issues of relevance to the organisation (e.g. about issues affecting users)
- Specialised training related to the volunteer role (e.g. counselling skills etc)
- Training on generic work-place skills (e.g. communication, project management etc)
- IT or other technical training
- Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

**Q12 Does any of this training lead to a formal qualification?**

- Yes – Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- No

**Q13 Why do you think it is important for your organisation to provide this training for your volunteers?**

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**Q14 Have your volunteers ever asked for any training or additional training?**

- Yes – Please specify:\_\_\_\_\_
- No

### Section Three: Assessing, accrediting and rewarding the voluntary experience

**Q15 Do you offer your volunteers any form of qualification, accreditation or award for their volunteering?**

- Yes – please go to Q16
- No – please go to Q18

**Q16 What kinds of accreditation and/or awards can volunteers access through your organisation?**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)                                | <input type="checkbox"/> A certificate from a local CVS or Volunteer Bureau                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open College Network Award (OCN)                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Millennium Volunteer Award  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City and Guilds Award  | <input type="checkbox"/> Duke of Edinburgh Award   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BTEC   | <input type="checkbox"/> A Volunteers Week certificate   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> University of Wales Certificate in Interpersonal Skills for Volunteers | <input type="checkbox"/> A certificate issued by your organisation recognising the number of hours spent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ASDAN Certificate in Community Volunteering                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)_____   |

**Q17 How are these awards verified?**

- Internally (i.e. awarded by your own staff)  
**Please specify which** \_\_\_\_\_
- Externally (i.e. awarded in line with externally defined criteria)  
**Please specify which** \_\_\_\_\_
- They are not verified

**Q18 In general, how does your organisation monitor a volunteer's progress and development?**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No monitoring takes place                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Through interviews/review meetings with volunteer coordinators/managers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Progress is monitored in an informal way                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)_____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Through seeking feedback about volunteers from paid staff |  |

**Q19 At the end of their placement in your organisation, is the progress made and skills gained by the volunteer assessed at all?**

- Yes
- No

**Q20 If yes, how?**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Via exit interviews                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Records are kept of the qualifications and awards gained by the volunteer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Through a self-completion exit questionnaire     | <input type="checkbox"/> Informally, through general observations                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A report is completed by the volunteer's manager | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)_____   |

**Section Four: Recognising the value of volunteering**

**Q21 To what extent do you think that volunteering in your organisation has helped volunteers develop the following work-based skills?**

	To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	Not relevant to our organisation
IT skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working in an office environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organising events and/or meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understanding the voluntary sector	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpersonal skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership and/or project management skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching/training skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledge of legal issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledge of foreign language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accounting / finance skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Press / PR / Media skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist knowledge related to the core work of our organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q22 To what extent do you think that volunteering in your organisation has helped volunteers develop the following interpersonal skills?**

	To a high degree	To some degree	Not at all	Not relevant to our organisation
Confidence and self-esteem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to meet and mix with new people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ability to work on their own initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Active listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team working	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reliability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Willingness to get involved in a range of tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q23 Do you know of any volunteers who have gain paid employment as a direct result of the skills and experienced gained in your organisation?**

Yes – Please give details: \_\_\_\_\_

No

**Q24** In general, do you think that employers recognise the value of volunteering when recruiting new staff?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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**Q25** In general, do you think that employers recognise specific qualifications and awards gained by volunteering? (e.g. MV Awards, ASDAN etc)

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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**Q26** What more do you think could be done to encourage employers to recognise the value of volunteering experiences among potential new employees?

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## Section Five: About your organisation

Please fill in this form in relation to your particular organisation, not your head office

**Q27. Is your organisation a branch of a national organisation?**

Yes

No

**Q28. What is your organisations area of activity? (please tick one box)**

Animal Welfare

Equality of opportunity/Law/Advocacy

Arts/Culture/Heritage

International Development

Business/Professional Association/Union

Medical/Health/Sickness

Charitable Trust

Religious/Faith activities

Disability

Research

Economic/Community development

Resource and Umbrella organisation

Education/Training/ Employment

Social Care/Welfare/ Housing/Homelessness

Environment/Conservation

Sport/Recreation/Leisure

Other (please specify)

**Q29. When was your organisation established?**

Before 1950

1950-1970

1971-1990

1991-2000

After 2000

**Q30. Geographic level which your organisation works at**

Smaller than  
borough level

Local authority

Regional

National

International

**Q31. If your organisation is a membership organisation, how many members do you have?**

1-10

11-49

50-99

100-499

More than 500

**Q32. Number of paid staff**

None

1-9

10-49

50-99

More than 100

**Q33. Budget per year in pounds (£)**

Less than  
£5,000

£5001-  
£10,000

£10,001-  
£30,000

£30,001-  
£100,000

£100,001-£275,000

More than £276,000

**Section Six: Get involved in developing a tool to assess voluntary experiences**

The Institute for Volunteering Research is looking for organisations that would be interested in working with us to help develop ways of assess the experiences of volunteers.

Would your organisation be interested in finding out more about taking part in this project?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Please provide the contact details of who to contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please use this space to add any additional comments you may have.