

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: Galway City Community Network, the Public Participation Network in Galway City

Completed by: GCCN

Title/position:

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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?
	European Union 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?
	Yes – there needs to be a comprehensive policy and strategy. Focus needs also to be put on the structures on and in which people 'volunteer'. For example, GCCN members give their time and expertise on a voluntary basis in policy and decision-making structures within the local authority but are largely ignored or disrespected. GCCN has undertaken research with GCCN members on this issue. Considerable elements of government policy is contingent on people undertaking this work on a voluntary basis, yet the responsibility of the other side to recognise, respect and value input is not addressed.

	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?
	'A society where people and communities contributing on a voluntary basis contributes meaningfully to supporting vibrant, inclusions and sustainable communities throughout Ireland'

	Section 7: Objectives of a Volunteering Strategy
4	What objectives for Irish volunteering should be set for the purposes of this strategy?
	So much work is undertaken on a voluntary basis that goes unfunded and unsupported but is crucial to the common good. A fund needs to be created to support work of this nature

	Section 8: The Volunteering Community
5	What is the role of the public in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?
	GCCN is concerned with people working on a voluntary basis from the more organised community, voluntary and environmental sectors
6	What is the role of the VIOs in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?
	Crucial. They need to be supported to in turn support their volunteers and encourage them to engage with the PPN

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?
	GCCN works closely with Volunteer Galway but there is scope for enhanced collaboration. Collaboration is core to the way that GCCN works and it would be useful to see this reciprocated
10	How can the Department facilitate co-operation between Volunteer Centres, Volunteer Ireland and the PPNs?
	Specific initiatives that we can collaborate on
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?
	GCCN would caution against volunteering being seen merely in this way. Due recognition and support needs to be afforded to PPN members that give so much time on a voluntary basis for the common good but whose contribution can be under-valued
13	What is the role of central Government (outside the Department of Rural and Community Development) in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?
14	How could the Department further facilitate engagement between the business sector and volunteering?
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.
	Yes
18	Do you agree with the approach outlined above? If not, please provide reasons.
	Yes

Section 10: Challenges to Volunteering	
19	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering?
	An acknowledgment of burn-out and volunteer fatigue
20	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to raise awareness of volunteering opportunities?
21	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage general participation in volunteering?
22	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage the participation of young people in volunteering?
	GCCN would like to see initiatives to encourage young people to actively participate
23	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage the participation of marginalised groups in volunteering?
	GCCN believes that participation of people from marginalised communities should not be an add-on but core to the work – as it is for GCCN. Additional supports are required would like to see initiatives to encourage and support people from marginalised communities to actively participate
24	Should the strategy seek to focus on or identify particular marginalised group(s) to encourage their participation in volunteering?
	Yes – the nine grounds would be a useful start
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?
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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?

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?
32	Should a volunteering code of conduct for volunteers and volunteer involving organisations (VIOs) be developed and implemented? What should this code include?
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?
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?
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?
40	What criteria should be used to gauge success in delivery of the National Volunteering Strategy?

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	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?
	Yes
42	Who should participate in a National Advisory Group?
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?