



December, 2019

Working Draft of Volunteering Strategy 2020 – 2025

Contents

1. About this Strategy	5
1.1 Purpose	5
1.2 Government Commitment	6
1.3 Background	8
1.4 Volunteering at a glance	10
1.5 Shaping this Volunteering Strategy	10
1.6 Shared Vision	11
1.7 Shared Values	13
1.8 Economic Value	13
2. What do we mean by Volunteering?	15
2.1 Definition	15
2.2 Who Volunteers	17
2.3 Community and Voluntary Sector	18
2.4 Corporate Social Responsibility	18
2.5 Skills Based Volunteering	19
2.6 Social Enterprise	19
2.7 International Volunteering	19
2.8 Young Volunteers - the Future	20
3. Why do we need Volunteers?	21
3.1 The value of Volunteering	22
3.2 For Volunteer Involving Organisations, volunteering -.....	22
3.3 For Society, volunteering-	22
3.4 For local communities, volunteering -.....	23
3.5 For volunteers, volunteering-	23
3.6 For Beneficiaries, volunteering-	23
4. Who are the drivers?	25
4.1 Government Policy and Funding	25
4.2 Volunteer-supporting Environment	26
4.3 Personal Motivation	27
5. What are our Challenges?	28
5.1 Challenges identified in the CFI	28
5.2 Challenges to Volunteer Involving Organisations	28
5.3 Challenges to Volunteers	29

5.4	Challenges to Communities	29
5.5	Challenges to Volunteering Infrastructure	30
5.6	Research	31
6.	Where we are and where are we going?.....	32
6.1	Strategic Objectives.....	32
7.	How will we get there?	46
7.1	Implementation and Monitoring.....	46
7.2	Evaluation	46
	Appendices.....	47
	Appendix 1: Membership of the National Advisory Group	48
	Appendix 2: Impact of volunteering	49
	Appendix 3: Foróige Consultation	50
	Appendix 4: Abbreviations.....	52
	Appendix 5: Bibliography.....	53

The Bluestack Special Needs Foundation – Shaun Meehan

The Bluestack Special Needs Foundation was set up approximately eighteen years ago by a man called Patrick Mc Brearty to help his daughter who has Downs Syndrome, as there were no services in Donegal Town. Shaun Meehan outlines what it means to be a volunteer.

“I have been going to The Bluestack as volunteer for three years. When I started not many people knew about this voluntary organisation and in them three years it has grown. When I started there were only two clubs - the Teen club and The Saturday club, and now we also have a choir. The things that we do at the clubs differ each week as we listen to what the kids want to do.

The Saturday club is for children aged between four and twelve years of age who have a disability. Each volunteer is assigned a child who they play with for the duration of the club. The best thing about The Saturday club, in my opinion, is listening to the children as there is no filter in what they say. The Choir is really only getting recognised now. We practice every Wednesday and we have performed in The Abbey Hotel and Croke Park.

I have been volunteering for three years and what I understand is all the volunteers are like one big family. Even though we are working with children, we are still able to talk to one another about problems that we are facing ourselves and are given advice on how to overcome the problem. The more volunteers that The Bluestack gets – the more children they can facilitate in each club and the more it can grow. You also make great friends with children and the volunteers. Although this might not be for everybody, I would advise you to try volunteering once and if you don't like it that's okay. The main thing is - you tried.

The thing that I like the most about The Bluestack is that the door is always open and there is always someone there to chat to and have the craic, so I urge you to volunteer once and I can guarantee you will get hooked, just like I did”.



1. About this Strategy

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Strategy is to recognise, support and promote the unique value and contribution of volunteers to Irish society. The Strategy also provides an opportunity for Government to acknowledge how important volunteering is to the well-being of the nation and to steer the delivery of an agreed and ambitious vision.

Volunteers make a vital contribution to Irish society, developing communities as vibrant, inclusive and sustainable places where people want to live. The economic, cultural and social benefits of volunteering permeate through an incredibly diverse range of activities which include providing supports to sport, health, education and the socially marginalised.

Therefore, as we look to the future we must ensure that we put the best possible supports and infrastructure in place so that volunteers and volunteer bodies continue to prosper and that the volunteering needs of present and future generations will be met.

The publication of the Department of Rural and Community Development's (the Department) five year Strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland – *Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities 2019 – 2024* addresses broader issues that affect the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS). These include issues relating to governance of CVS organisations, regulatory and compliance requirements, funding mechanisms and general developmental supports.

The first *National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland 2019-2022* is also part of this suite of policy initiatives from the Department of Rural and Community Development to support those who work with communities and disadvantaged groups. The development of this policy on Social Enterprise was underpinned by a research exercise conducted by the Department in partnership with the Social Finance Foundation. The aim of this research was to better understand the social enterprise sector in Ireland and to identify the issues that needed to be addressed for the sector to develop and grow.

Taken together these three strategies support the commitment in the Programme for a Partnership Government to “produce a coherent policy framework and develop a strategy to support the community and voluntary sector and encourage a cooperative approach between public bodies and the community and voluntary sector.”

We are all stakeholders in this Strategy. Accordingly, the Strategy serves as a road-map for us all. It will provide a way forward for Government, volunteers, potential volunteers, Volunteer Involving Organisations (VIO), Volunteer Ireland, Volunteer Centres (VC), educational bodies, the corporate community and for the people and communities whom volunteers support.

CLG Baile Buadáin Naomh Éanna

Ballyboden St. Endas GAA, Camogie and Ladies Football Club was founded in 1969 from the merger of Ballyboden Wanderers (1910) and Rathfarnham St. Endas (1966). It serves the combined areas of Ballyboden, Rathfarnham, Knocklyon, Ballycullen, Ballyroan and Firhouse respectively. The club fields over 150 teams in football, hurling, camogie and ladies football and works intensively with local schools as well as supporting the club's own mentors and players. Up to 1,000 children attend the club's six weeks Summer Camps programme which is the largest club-based summer camp in the country.

“Growing up in the club I had tremendous coaches and mentors who looked after me. I was acutely aware that all these people were giving their time freely. The club is a community that is there for you through good and bad times and [that] is built on all the volunteers involved” Sorcha Farrelly on the role of volunteers within the club

“What makes the Club is the people who volunteer and help out every week. The club for me is a place to be with friends and meet new people. I am giving my resources back to the community...when the community as a whole gives me so much more than that” Doireann Mullany on how volunteering with her club helps her feel part of the wider community

“I have gained life skills these learnings have helped me greatly in my career. The kit man and the people who help out with water etc. are the hardest working people in any set up. Those volunteers who gave their time to us as players in the nursery are the reason we are still playing and have such a love of the game today” David Curtin on how volunteers have contributed to his life and his sporting achievements

1.2 Government Commitment

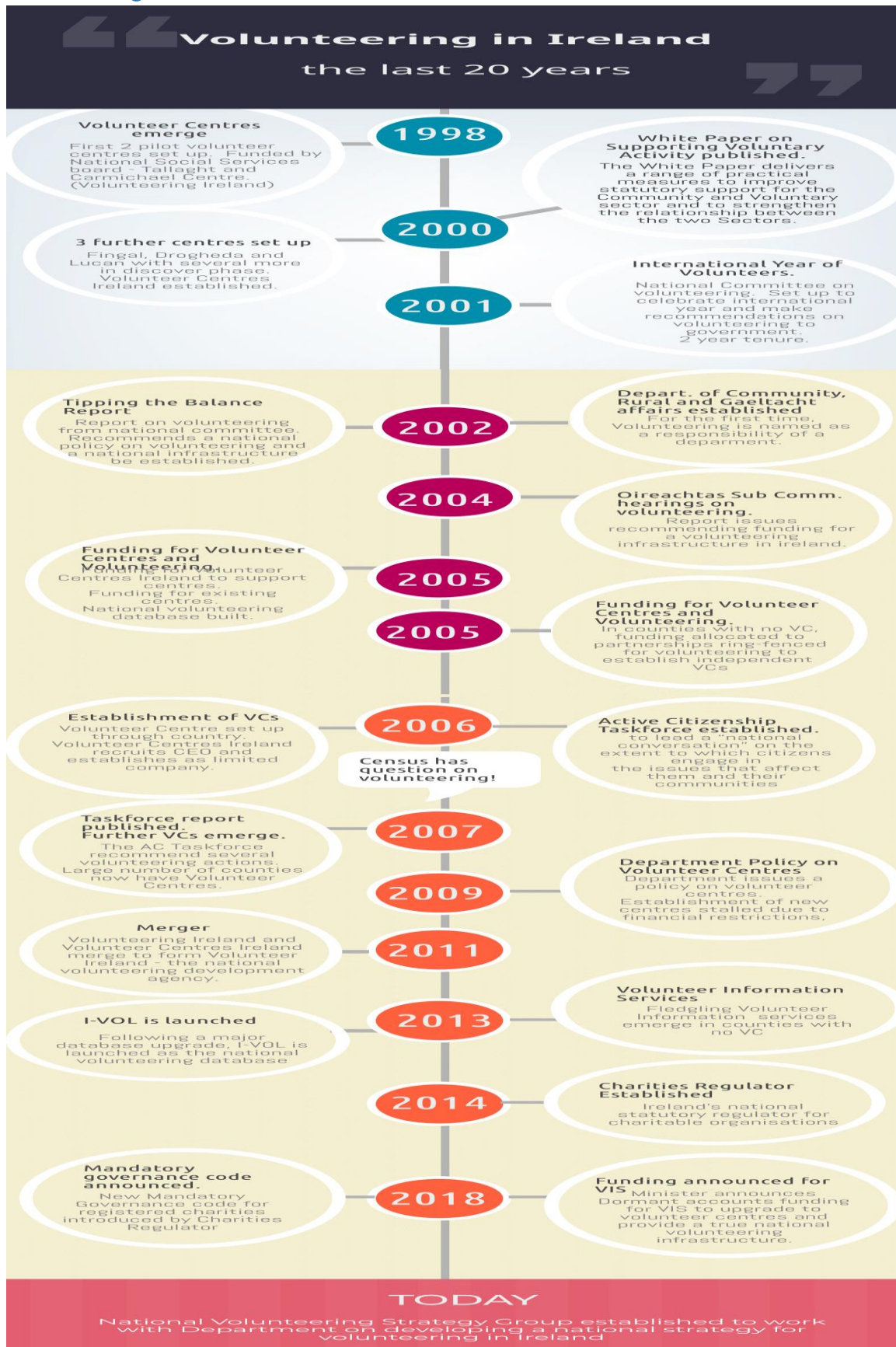
The Government recognises the unique value and contribution of volunteers to Irish society. It is intrinsic to the fabric of our communities. Through this Strategy, we acknowledge that Government Departments depend on volunteers and volunteering structures to deliver on our own commitments, particularly in the area of service delivery. We are fortunate to have one of the highest levels of volunteering in the world but, that said, the challenges facing volunteering require that we take action now to ensure that we retain this position into the future.

We recognise:

- that volunteering is diverse – it happens formally and informally and ranges from decades of continuous commitment supporting community events to lending a hand when needed;
- that the nature of volunteering is changing and that we need to have the structures in place to respond and support this changing environment; and
- that while volunteering is a critical part of the community and voluntary sector, it also sits outside, in the private sector, in politics, in sport and with the individual amongst others.

Volunteering is inherently good for the individual, for the community and for the services that volunteering underpins. However volunteering is not free, and investment is essential to creating a dynamic and thriving volunteering culture. Ireland as we know it would not exist without the input of volunteers and for that reason, the Government is committed to supporting and facilitating volunteering through the implementation of this Strategy.

1.3 Background



In Ireland, volunteering has developed naturally and passed down traditionally through generations. This culture of volunteering has always played an important role in the development and delivery of a range of services to our communities. The past twenty years have seen the development and evolution of a volunteering infrastructure underpinned by central government policy and strategy initiatives seeking to address the challenges of changing demographics, societal structures and regulatory environment.

The Government's 2000 'White Paper on a Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity and for Developing the Relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary Sector' (2000) published by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs described the community and voluntary sector as a continuum, and suggested that many organisations contained both community and voluntary elements. The White Paper recognised that it is not the role of Governments to control and be involved in every aspect of volunteering, but to put in place an enabling framework that strikes the right balance between nurturing volunteering and also having proper accountability.

The 2002 report of the National Committee on Volunteering 'Tipping the Balance' highlighted the diversity of organisational forms of volunteering. Formal volunteering takes place in organisational settings, particularly through voluntary organisations, non-profit organisations, or the social economy, but also under the aegis of employers, political and social activism or in conjunction with statutory schemes. Informal volunteering occurs outside of an organisational setting, often by individuals who may not even regard themselves as volunteers.

The 2007 Report of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship looked at the wider landscape of people's participation in the society around them through communities, neighbourhoods, political structures and workplaces. Volunteering through the community and voluntary sector forms an important part of active citizenship.

At a very broad level, some consider the community and voluntary sector to comprise all organisations that are non-Government and non-private sector; forming a 'third sector.' But for this Strategy it is important to have a clear focus on volunteering. It is also essential that this Strategy is additional and complimentary to the strategy for the community and voluntary sector which addresses broader issues that affect the CVS. As underlined in the responses to the public and stakeholder consultations undertaken in the preparation of this Strategy, volunteering is a part of but also broader than the CVS.

1.4 Volunteering at a glance

- 28.4% or 1 million people aged 15 and over volunteer.
- 54.7% of volunteering is carried out directly by individuals and not through an organisation - this is informal volunteering.
- 45.3% of volunteering is carried out through an organisation – this is formal volunteering.
- Formal volunteering through organisations happens in the 29,300 community and voluntary sector (CVS) organisations in Ireland.
- There are an estimated 81,500 volunteer directors and trustees in the CVS.
- 9,700 organisations in the CVS are registered charities, with volunteer charity trustees alone making up 51,000 volunteers.
- Studentvolunteer.ie logged 58,202 volunteering hours in the academic year 2018-2019.
- Volunteering also happens outside the C&V sector with many employees volunteering on company time, donated by their employer – a recent survey showed that 14% of volunteers started volunteering through their employer.
- Business in the Community Ireland’s Business Impact Map showed that in 2018, employees of 60 of the biggest companies in Ireland volunteered almost 265,000 hours.

1.5 Shaping this Volunteering Strategy

In late 2018, a Call for Input (CFI) was issued by the Department, seeking input from the public and stakeholders, to establish in broad terms the current position of Irish volunteering, and to inform our collective aspirations for its future. Responses to the CFI suggested a new National Volunteering Strategy is needed to set a direction for volunteering, volunteering infrastructure, volunteering involving organisations, volunteering supports and the volunteer. Following the CFI:

- a new volunteering National Advisory Group was convened to inform the new Strategy;
- a draft Strategy was agreed; and
- a second public consultation was carried out to further inform this Strategy.

The draft Strategy was finalised and approved by Government as the National Strategy on Volunteering 2020-2025 in (month) 2020.

Infographic of road map outlining how we got here (map to include)

- Call for Input 2019 - 130 responses approx.
- Establishment of the National Advisory Group, May 2019
- Draft Strategy November 2019
- Public Consultation December 2019
- Launch of the 2020-2025 Volunteering Strategy

“It is important all stakeholders are involved from the very beginning in the development of a national volunteering strategy, so that their views are captured and reflected in the development of the final strategy which emerges”. - Minister Seán Canney, T.D. (launching the public Call for Input into the Volunteering Strategy)

1.6 Shared Vision

Ireland has one of the highest levels of volunteering in the world but we need to be mindful of challenges facing volunteering and the actions we need to take now to ensure we retain this position into the future. *Our Communities: A Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland* recognises “...the strength of voluntary activity is that it emerges organically from communities, but it needs support if it is to flourish”.

Agreeing on a shared vision for the future of Irish volunteering is essential to the effectiveness of a Volunteering Strategy. We need to move forward together with a collective end goal that keeps us focused on meeting the existing and emerging challenges facing volunteering.

Our vision is of “a society where volunteering is promoted, valued, facilitated and supported so that people can contribute to developing and maintaining vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities.”

An Organisation needs to -

<p>Decide to Involve Volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about and develop volunteer roles • Develop diverse roles to suit different volunteers and different organisational needs • Understand where volunteering fits within the organisation • See the value of volunteering across the organisation 	<p>Find Volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have attractive and well-written role descriptions • Advertise volunteering roles • Find volunteers with right skills and competencies • Recruit, screen and select volunteers • Match volunteers to the right roles • Reach diverse audiences • Induct volunteers
<p>Keep Volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insure volunteers • Make the most of volunteers as ambassadors • Provide training and support • Garda vet volunteers where necessary • Ensure volunteers are trained to meet needs of the organisation • Make the most of volunteers across the organisation • Evaluate the impact of volunteers • Ensure the volunteer programme is valued within the organisation • Have access to training, advice and progression • Thank volunteers • Pay expenses 	<p>Deal with Difficulties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage difficult volunteers • Know what rights the organisation has in terms of volunteers • Get advice on a difficult situation • Have the resources to deal with a difficulty • Have a volunteer policy to refer to • Have a code of conduct • Have a volunteer agreement
<p>End The Relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to ask a volunteer to leave • Get advice if needed • Ensure the volunteer speaks well of the organisation • Conduct an exit interview 	

1.7 Shared Values

To move forward towards our shared vision, it is necessary to recognise that volunteering is diverse. Consequently, while we all want to support and enhance volunteering, our values and motivations may be informed by different experiences and circumstances. This Strategy represents Government's clear commitment to supporting volunteering. It is underpinned by the following core values:

Commitment to a vibrant volunteering landscape and to the people within the communities it serves	Central to this Strategy is an acknowledgement of the diverse ways in which people volunteer. Through this Strategy, this diverse volunteering landscape will be supported to continue and to develop further.
Trust and integrity	All partners and stakeholders are committed to acting with integrity and maintaining a sense of trust in the implementation of this Strategy.
Inclusion	This Strategy demonstrates a commitment to inclusivity in volunteering, so that everyone who wants to can volunteer and feel that their contribution is supported and valued.
Partnership	We developed this Strategy through partnership and a collaborative approach and this will continue as we implement the Strategy actions over the coming years.
Quality and excellence	This Strategy will support volunteers and volunteer-involving-organisations to achieve quality and excellence in their contributions to communities and to wider society.
Appreciation	The purpose of this Strategy is to recognise, support and promote the unique value and contribution of volunteering to Irish society.

1.8 Economic Value

In economic terms, the 2013 Quarterly National Household Survey conducted by the CSO outlined that the value of volunteer work amounted to over €2 billion annually (after annualising the hours and applying the national minimum wage at that time).

More recently, research produced by Indecon (2018) has estimated that the economic value of volunteering in registered Irish charities is €649 million and that the charity sector supports 289,197 employees. These *figures relate to registered Irish charities only* and represent only a part of the impact of volunteering in wider Irish society.

Over 1 million people in Ireland volunteer with about half of those volunteering in sporting activities. (Volunteer Ireland - Migrant Participation in Sports Volunteering in Ireland 2019)

The role of volunteers is vital to the basic running of sporting activities and maintenance of sporting structures. The Irish Sports Monitor 2019 Mid-Year Report notes 12% of the population regularly volunteer for sport and approximately 875,000 people have volunteered for sport during the past year. Every sports club and event relies on volunteers who play a wide variety of roles e.g. coaching, transport, kit management.

In order to undertake a more comprehensive analysis of the economic value of all types of volunteering, further data gathering and the establishment of a national baseline would be required.

While it is possible to estimate the monetary value of volunteering hours, the broader socio-economic and counterfactual benefits, including to mental health, are not easily quantified. For example, it is difficult to measure in monetary terms the value of weekly visits under the ALONE befriending programme.

2. What do we mean by Volunteering?

Quote from Hicham Lamchaali – Volunteer living in Direct Provision, Dublin

“Volunteering will make you happy. Even if you are happy now, volunteering will make you happier. When you are not from Ireland it can help you make friends and learn things about Ireland you never knew before. It will also make you feel like you’re doing something good.”

Responses to the Call for Input suggested volunteering resonates differently with people including volunteers themselves. Depending on the individual experience, volunteering can be understood as a formal role, such as a trustee of a charity or as an informal and possibly unacknowledged role, for example, ‘the washer of the football jerseys’.

Volunteering impacts positively on society, on communities and on the people who live in those communities. Whether formal or informal, organised or spontaneous, volunteering is about civic engagement and active participation in shaping the society we want to be part of.

2.1 Definition

The CFI asked how volunteering should be defined. Our definition emerged from the responses received and aims to reflect as many of the views as possible to ensure an inclusive platform from which this Strategy and its implementation will emerge.

“Volunteering is any time willingly given, either formally or informally, for the common good and without financial gain.”

This definition covers a wide range of ‘volunteering activities’ for example -

- formal volunteering taking place within organisations (including institutions and agencies);
- informal volunteering, that which takes place outside an organisational setting; and
- the individual who, in many cases, does not consider what they do as volunteering but sees his or her actions as ‘lending a hand’ or ‘being neighbourly’.

To put it simply volunteering is doing more than you have to, because you want to, because you care.

What do we mean by ‘common good’?

- ❖ Actions taken in order to benefit society as a whole.
- ❖ Volunteering undertaken with free will and outside of the immediate family.

What do we mean by 'financial gain'?

- ❖ Volunteers are not financially better-off through volunteering and often volunteer at their own expense.
- ❖ Payment or reimbursement for out of pocket expenses is not financial gain.

Alone Case Study

Nora is an ALONE service user for over 4 years. She is 82 years old and is visual impaired. Below is her story:

"A few years back I realised I need to have people calling and I contacted ALONE and received very good help from them. They got a visitor for me which is very important. My needs might be different to other people. I need to get out, get exercise, get a walk, get things read for me, forms filled in sometimes; things like that. I'm solely depending on people, like ALONE, to call so if I have an emergency I have someone to get in touch with.

There's more to it than a chat, a friendship has built up. Every week I look forward to my visit. We have nice conversations, we put the world to rights. I feel I can say what I want to say to Jo. She's great company and I look forward to her visits and all the help she gives me. If I hadn't Jo I would be without the help I need. It's about being with somebody I feel comfortable with. Trust comes into it all".

"The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention." – Oscar Wilde

Josephine is an ALONE volunteer for over 4 years. Her story is below:

"I worked right up until retirement and then I was at a total loss about what am I going to do. I didn't want to wake up in the morning and not have anything to do, so volunteering saved my life. I've been visiting four and a half years and it's just been the perfect match as far as I've been concerned. You build a friendship, you build a relationship and it's wonderful. Volunteering means to me using my time and having a purpose. Volunteering was huge to me, I look forward to coming on my visits. The fact that Nora is blind means I've to be mindful of the different obstacles she faces. There's so much more for me than if I visited a sighted person. It has made me more and more conscious.

I would always suggest volunteering. It's giving back and I think giving back is really important. I think it's healthier for me and for my mind. It's better for people to keep as busy as you can as you get older, as it's good physically and mentally".

2.2 Who Volunteers

The Strategy is about acknowledging and supporting the work of volunteers and Volunteer Involving Organisations which is undertaken on a daily basis in our communities. It also reflects diversity in our communities and the different backgrounds and circumstances of all involved in volunteering.

This Strategy also appreciates the need to ensure that all members of our society can positively contribute to the sustainable development of our communities. It will complement the commitments laid out in a number of other Government strategies, such as the *Migrant Integration Strategy* and *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* amongst others, to provide an engaging, proactive and inclusive framework and guiding principles for volunteering in our country.

Our volunteers come from all walks of life, young and old, urban and rural, all contributing towards common goals aimed at developing and maintaining vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities.

In 2013 nearly 50% of volunteers newly registered in Dublin came from migrant backgrounds – Dublin City Volunteer Centre report

Volunteer who formally resided in Direct Provision, Sligo

Ms. Shupai Matewa, is originally from Malawi. Shupai was in the Direct Provision system for approx. 9 years and received her leave to remain a number of years ago and received Irish Citizenship last year. Shupai now resides in Sligo and works in a local childcare facility after completing her degree in Early Childhood Education from IT Sligo.

“Life in Direct Provision (DP) was lonely, stressful, boring and unproductive. It was affecting my well-being, particularly my mental health. I longed to be out of the centre doing something. I asked the manager of the DP centre where I was accommodated, how I can get involved in volunteering. He directed me to the Sligo Volunteer Centre (SVC). I visited the SVC office where the dedicated staff gave me all relevant information about volunteering and supported me in getting started and to keep on volunteering.

I have volunteered with over 15 groups in Sligo over a 11 year period and to this day continue to volunteer with Sligo Tidy Towns and St Vincent de Paul. Sligo Volunteer Centre was very supportive to me each time I took on a new volunteer role and through volunteering I have made many friends and feel very welcomed and accepted in my

community. I was also invited and became a Board Member of the Management Committee of Sligo Volunteer Centre for 3 years.

By volunteering side by side makes me feel part and parcel with the local community. I do not feel isolated because we do the same/similar tasks together, enjoying the sense of humour that is so rich in my local community. I know I belong to my local community”.

2.3 Community and Voluntary Sector

The community and voluntary sector comprises a diverse range of community, voluntary and charitable organisations with origins in the community. Community and voluntary organisations can vary significantly in size, scale and ethos, from the smallest community and voluntary groups to the largest charities. More than a million people actively volunteer annually in Ireland at an estimated value of more than €2bn per annum.

Over 50,000 unpaid volunteer trustees and board members sit on boards and management committees of charitable organisations, while more than 300,000 people volunteer with registered charities alone and yield an economic value of €649m per year (based on the minimum wage).

2.4 Corporate Social Responsibility

While the majority of volunteering is undertaken by individuals in their own time, the definition also recognises the role of business and the corporate sector (Corporate Social Responsibility - CSR), which supports and facilitates employees to volunteer, in groups or as individuals.

‘Towards Responsible Business’ Ireland’s National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility 2017-2020 was published in June 2017. The Plan aims, over three years, to position Ireland as a *‘Centre of Excellence for responsible and sustainable business practice through the adoption of best practice in CSR’*. It focuses on four dimensions - Workplace, Marketplace, Environment and Community.

CSR and responsible business practices benefit everyone by:

- Sharing the skills and expertise, labour and other resources from business with the local community;
- Helping employers to attract and retain talented employees;
- Providing employers and employees with a social purpose aligned to their core business objectives;
- Supporting delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and
- Ensuring a positive relationship between businesses and the local community and creating shared value.

2.5 Skills-Based Volunteering

Skills-based volunteering provides an opportunity for business and individuals to partner with VIOs, with employees volunteering their skills to assist the VIOs deliver their organisational objectives. Research has proven that skills-based volunteering has five times the impact that practical or non-skilled volunteering has. There are many examples of professional skills sharing between businesses and VIO's including professional skills in marketing, IT, HR, finance, sales, consultancy and strategy design and many others.

Pro-bono support is where a company provides their core business service for free to a VIO. This might, for example, be an accounting firm's employees advising a VIO on finance governance and procedures.

This Strategy seeks to increase awareness of and facilitate greater understanding around this model of professional skills volunteering to actively promote the expansion of business in partnership with local Volunteer Organisations.

2.6 Social Enterprise

Social Enterprises are enterprises that trade on an ongoing basis to achieve a social, societal or environmental impact and often such organisations depend on the contributions of a mixture of paid staff and unpaid volunteers. The vibrancy, effectiveness and overall impact of many social enterprises in Ireland therefore depends on volunteers at various levels including in some cases, voluntary board members.

Volunteer involvement adds significant value in terms of community engagement, trust building as well as ensuring transparent and accountable governance of these organisations. Social Enterprises attract volunteers with a diverse mix of skills and experience, people who can inject ideas, passion, and creativity and have the capabilities to help shape their future direction and ensure growth.

2.7 International Volunteering

International volunteering is about volunteers who contribute their time to work for organisations or causes outside their home country. In most such cases, volunteers work in developing countries on international development programmes, with local volunteer organisations typically in the areas of health promotion, education and sustainable development. International volunteering is a broad term which is used to capture multi-year, skilled placements as well as short term roles and includes a range of activities conducted by governments and charities to promote ethical and skills-based overseas volunteering to

deliver results for beneficiaries and to enhance Global Citizenship in Ireland. In 2017, almost 2,000 Volunteers from 40 organisations volunteered in 56 different countries around the world.

2.8 Young Volunteers - the Future

Consultation on this Strategy included a lively engagement with fifty representatives from the national council of Foróige, Ireland's leading youth organisation. The participants, aged between 12 and 18, came from all over Ireland and from a diverse range of backgrounds, demonstrating the strength, variety and reach of youth volunteering that currently exists. This Strategy will build upon these achievements to further promote, develop and nurture the role of volunteering among young people and wider society.

Six questions were posed to the group about volunteering, including

- What volunteering means to them;
- The barriers that are presented; and
- How volunteering can be more inclusive.

As Foróige clubs are volunteer-led, there was an overwhelmingly positive and reaffirming response as to the importance of volunteering. That said, there were also observations regarding what stops young people from volunteering. This Strategy provides an opportunity to address these issues and to introduce measures targeted specifically at increasing participation amongst young people including:

- increased availability of information and volunteering opportunities suitable for an under 18 age profile;
- addressing the somewhat negative perception of volunteering among their peer groups;
- access to training and the question of formal accreditation;
- considering the issue of transportation costs; and
- examining ways to streamline the Garda vetting application process and insurance costs.

An expanded list of the consultation questions and collated answers, including requested supports and potential opportunities from which to enhance engagement, can be found in Appendix 3.

“Volunteers and volunteering is the basis for all young people to have a chance to empower themselves, volunteering also guides young people in the right way forward. Volunteers and volunteering is immensely important to young people and we wouldn't have half the amount of opportunities we have without their input and guidance”. – Jack Nolan Foróige member

3. Why do we need Volunteers?

The impact of volunteerism is extensive and intrinsic to the social fabric of our daily lives. Volunteering assists people of all ages, social backgrounds and abilities to have a healthier, happier and more inclusive life. It contributes to the development and sustainability of communities, not least in rural areas where access to social and health services can be more difficult.

Volunteering is an integral part of our community and voluntary sector, but it also sits in the private sector, in politics, in enterprise, in education, in sport, and with individuals. It intersects with the work of all government departments, all of which rely on volunteers in some part to achieve their objectives.

Volunteering also contributes to the arts and our cultural heritage. The Government's *Creative Ireland Programme 2017-2020* calls on all of us to play a part in placing our rich cultural heritage, and its potential, at the centre of our lives and has as one of its high-level principles to 'recognise and support the cultural contribution of the voluntary sector'.

Volunteering is a great idea for students and young people to practice your skills, discover new ones and build your CV. It allows you to expand your circle of friends and also to create relevant relationships that could bring life-changing experiences for you.

A lot of the non-profits and/or charity organisations registered with us are more than happy to welcome Under 18s and support them during their volunteering process.

Nadya Doyle, An Taisce Climate Ambassador Programme, Wexford

At just 16 years old, Nadya was the first person in her community to become part of An Taisce's Climate Ambassador Programme. Having always had a keen interest in the environment, she has been encouraged by her parents to recycle from a young age. Nadya – who is also the chair of the Green Schools Committee in her secondary school – chose to become a climate ambassador to raise awareness of the effects of climate change and to highlight things that people can do every day to help the environment such as correct recycling practices.

Nadya has organised many initiatives as part of her role such as a beach clean-up in at Bannow strand as part of Clean Coasts Week. She was asked by the OPW to give a talk on the cause and effect of climate change in Ireland at Tintern Abbey during Heritage week.

Nadya organised a competition among the staff of Carlow County Council on the amount of batteries that could be collected for recycling to raise funds for Laura Lynn children's

hospice (WEE Schools Pledge) and has volunteered with New Ross Tidy towns on a clean-up and is the process of helping them making a mural out of bottle tops for the town.

3.1 The value of Volunteering

Volunteering enriches our society, it brings people together for the better of their communities and beyond national borders. It is also a very personal and positive experience creating an increased sense of well-being, whether it be from leading and driving initiatives, giving back to the community by sharing knowledge and experiences or simply lending a hand for the greater good. Looking through a broad lens, the impact of volunteering can be viewed as a support to democracy, inclusivity and the well-being of people.

Many community based grassroots initiatives are both led by and dependent upon volunteers. And as we look to the future, the participation of grassroots communities is essential to the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals.

3.2 For Volunteer Involving Organisations, volunteering -

- brings the perspectives and insights of the local community, including beneficiaries, to the heart of the organisation;
- provides leadership and inspiration at local level;
- can increase the diversity of the organisation;
- provides advocacy, support and awareness about their organisation and allows organisations to reach a wider audience;
- empowers organisations by engaging a wider audience from the local community;
- secures added support and resources to complement and enhance the work of the organisations;
- provides volunteers who act as trustees that are essential to the existence of charitable organisations; and
- can provide an effective means of recruiting new staff from among volunteers.

3.3 For Society, volunteering-

- is an expression of active citizenship, inclusion and social capital and as such, is part of a healthy democracy;
- helps us deliver our international commitments, e.g. supporting the delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals; and
- enables people to support the valuable activity of non-profit groups and organisations.

3.4 For local communities, volunteering -

- brings an irreplaceable passion and commitment, whether drawn from geographical or common interest;
- adds local and personal knowledge and perspective into the work of non-profit organisations;
- ensures the on-going delivery of a range of important services, including assisting Government in the provision of such services e.g. some emergency services;
- helps build social networks, connectivity and community resilience;
- facilitates community members to identify and take action on a broad range of issues such as climate action and social inclusion; and
- has the potential to bring a wider perspective into local communities, for example volunteers returning from abroad.

3.5 For volunteers, volunteering–

- connects people to their communities, reducing isolation and enabling people to get involved in causes they care about;
- afford an opportunity for people to build on their skills and employability;
- improves mental and physical health; and
- increases levels of happiness and contentment.

Rachel Crawford

“Volunteering opened my eyes to the value of giving your time to help others - the value it brings to the life of the children, their families and to yourself as a volunteer. Ultimately it impacted on my career choice and what I am today, a paediatric OT 😊”

3.6 For Beneficiaries, volunteering-

- helps build links with the wider community;
- provides access to vital services;
- can instil a sense of well-being and security; and
- creates a unique sense of value, by being supported by someone who is not being paid.

Eileen Lennox

“The Bluestack Special Needs Foundation is a vital resource for us as a family. It offers valuable opportunities for our daughter to get involved in activities that she would not otherwise be able to participate in. There is always a friendly listening ear and lots of support to help us through the tough times”.

Alison Long

“It means a sense of belonging or inclusion with others in a group where all are accepted for whom they are, and cared for by volunteers with big hearts 🤍”

Volunteering is at the heart of vibrant, inclusive, sustainable communities

Case Study

Carolyn Akintola

Carolyn is a disability awareness advocate who has been volunteering since she was 12 years old. Having spent 15 years as a carer for her mother, she once again has the time for volunteering and taken on a number of volunteer roles. Carolyn volunteers with the South Dublin County Volunteer Corps supporting local events and festivals such as Tallaghtfest. She is a member of the South Dublin County Council Disability Advisory Consultancy Panel and previously volunteered with St. Vincent De Paul for 25 years.

As a lifelong volunteer, we asked Carolyn what makes her do it and her answer was simple. “If we want to live in a good society, we have to take part and make a contribution. I’ve gained a lot from society as have many others so I feel it’s important to give that back.”

What piece of advice would she give to someone who has never volunteered? “Don’t be a stranger. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Just try it and if you don’t like it you can try something else. Don’t give up at the first hurdle, there are so many different things you can do – you’ll find something that suits you.”

4. Who are the drivers?

Modern society faces complex problems requiring innovative thinking and flexible responses at national and local level. Government can put structures and funding in place but this only brings us some of the way. To make a real difference, we also rely on the vision and dedication of organisations and individuals who volunteer in the community. Put simply, many local services and community care initiatives are dependent on the volunteer – otherwise the service cannot be delivered to the same extent in many cases.

4.1 Government Policy and Funding

The Programme for a Partnership Government (2016) affirms the contribution of the community and voluntary sector in building a more just and prosperous society and underlines the strong focus on urban and rural regeneration within the sector. The Programme also commits to increasing supports to the sector, a more coherent policy framework and developing a supporting strategy to help encourage a collaborative approach between the sector and public bodies. The Department of Rural and Community Development is a key enabler of these commitments.

The Department is central to developing policy and supporting the development and growth of volunteering in Ireland. This is reflected in its mission to “promote rural and community development and to support vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities throughout Ireland” and its strategic objective to support the community, voluntary and charity sector and to strengthen its capacity to contribute to civil society.

Implementing the Strategy will support delivery of the Department’s strategic objectives and meet Programme for Government commitments vis-à-vis enabling volunteering and recognising, expanding and supporting the role of volunteers in society.

The Department also provides a framework of support for the voluntary sector to develop volunteering infrastructure. To this end funding is provided to a number of organisations to help strengthen and foster volunteering in Ireland and to build a support structure that will develop volunteering locally from the bottom up.

Volunteering is also supported by other Government Departments under their various programmes, policies and strategies for which they have responsibility. This Strategy will help ensure we move towards a more joined-up approach that supports and recognises the important role that volunteers and VIOs have to play in the delivery of these strategies and that they are supported accordingly.

4.2 Volunteer-supporting Environment

“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on Earth.” — Muhammad Ali

The volunteer supporting environment consists of 29,300 community and voluntary sector organisations in Ireland, who are VIOs actively involved in promoting volunteering, and as such play a critical role. In addition, volunteering is developed and nurtured by 22 Volunteer Centres, seven Volunteer Information Services (VISs) and Volunteer Ireland, all of which are supported by the Department of Rural and Community and Development. This volunteering infrastructure provides nationwide cover giving communities access to support and resources, through their local Volunteer Centre or Volunteering Information Service in every county. This encourages a rich breadth of volunteering in response to local needs.

Volunteer Ireland and the network of Volunteer Centres have developed a new volunteering app. The I-VOL app allows users to access volunteering opportunities in their local area. Users can search for roles near them by interest, cause and time they have available. They can also apply for roles directly through the app, keep track of their applications and volunteer hours undertaken through their profile. A number of higher education institutes have also been active in this area and have developed their own online portal, studentvolunteer.ie, which has over one thousand organisations registered and 14,000 student volunteers.

VIOs are of differing size and capacity; some organisations have very strong volunteering strategies in place overseen by professional volunteer managers; other smaller groups are completely volunteer led and recruitment is completed on an ad hoc basis with little or no support structures in place. As referenced previously, sporting organisations are largely volunteer led and the G.A.A. would consider itself one of the biggest voluntary groups in the country.

Large non-profit organisations also provide expertise, capacity and general and specific services to charities, not-for-profits and VIOs. These include, among others, The Wheel, Carmichael, Dóchas, Comhlámh and Boardmatch, amongst others. The supports they provide are invaluable to VIOs and cover a range of issues from good governance, board appointments and training, to ethical fundraising and international development.

The Charities Regulator (or the Charities Regulatory Authority) was established in 2014 and is the independent statutory body responsible for the registration and regulation of charities within the State. 33% of VIOs are also registered as charities. Given that such a considerable proportion of our voluntary groups operate as charities, the importance of the Regulator’s work in maintaining trust and confidence in the charity sector is, and will continue to be, critical to the Strategy’s core values of fostering integrity and promoting quality and excellence.

4.3 Personal Motivation

People volunteer for different reasons. Although many volunteer for altruistic reasons, motivations are varied and can be about increasing social networks and gaining skills. Based on responses from 13,095 volunteers registered on the national volunteering database I-VOL in 2018, the top motivations for choosing to volunteer are:

Insert speaking bubbles with:

- 14% "I want to do my bit to make the world a better place"
- 10% "I think it will be good for me"
- 10% "I want to make a difference in my community"
- 9% "I want to develop my skills/education"
- 8% "I want to assist my career/employment prospects"
- 6% "I want to meet people and expand my social and professional network"

5. What are our Challenges?

5.1 Challenges identified in the CFI

The challenges and barriers to volunteering vary from one country to the next, and from rural areas to urban areas. However, a comparison of national volunteering strategies across jurisdictions suggests many challenges are universal.

The CFI and Stakeholder consultations suggested the primary challenge to volunteering in Ireland isn't a lack of people willing and able to volunteer, rather it is the limited resources of volunteer involving organisations and their lack of capacity to engage and adapt to the changing needs of volunteers. This pressure on resources and the associated issues of funding and training deficits as well as the need for streamlined governance requirements emerged as recurring concerns across cross-sectoral volunteer organisations.

There is also a very clear message that we need to improve awareness of and increase participation in volunteering activities, particularly among those sections of our society who are currently underrepresented (e.g. younger people, marginalised groups). Research also indicates that one of the main reasons people do not volunteer is because they are not asked! This Strategy aims to ensure that anyone who wants to volunteer can do so and that we create the supporting environment for this to happen.

Common themes emerging for VIOs included funding levels, governance and regulatory requirements, administrative burden and capacity building. Smaller VIOs emphasised the impact of governance and regulatory requirements as one of the biggest challenges to volunteer led organisations.

From the volunteer viewpoint barriers included a lack of flexibility in the way, time and manner in which people could volunteer while many volunteers also highlighted that their contribution is not fully recognised or valued and that practical issues such as transport costs were not addressed.

5.2 Challenges to Volunteer Involving Organisations

- There is a lack of short-term, flexible volunteering opportunities to suit the diverse needs, interests and circumstances of potential volunteers.
- Many VIOs are volunteer led and in order to effectively manage their volunteer programmes, additional supports are required.
- Lack of clarity around roles, responsibilities or volunteer management structures of VIOs when engaging volunteers.

- Cost of compliance associated with regulation e.g. GDPR, Garda Vetting, regulation and duplication of reporting, means less resources and capacity for organisations to put into their volunteer programmes.
- Difficulty recruiting new volunteer board members and limited resources for adequate training.
- Lack of awareness, understanding and capacity to implement good governance practice, in particular for smaller organisations.
- VIOs struggle to create volunteering roles for young people under the age of 18.

5.3 Challenges to Volunteers

- Obstacles specific to rural locations e.g. transport, isolation and access to broadband.
- Lack of clarity around roles, responsibilities and rights for volunteers.
- Need for more understanding and research on the positive impact of volunteering on specific groups such as the disability sector, older people, gender, youth and education and migrants.
- Little or no opportunities to volunteer in Transition Year as volunteer roles, guidance or supports for students are not in place.
- Volunteers feeling that they are not supported in their roles for a number of reasons including training.
- Feeling their contribution is undervalued.
- Fear of over-commitment in terms of time.
- Lack of flexibility in terms of how and when they can volunteer.
- No access to public transport.

5.4 Challenges to Communities

- Large levels of volunteering are undertaken by a small cohort or “civic core,” which means we overly rely on a small group of people. We need to engage more and new people in volunteering.
- Lower levels of participation in volunteering among young people and more marginalised groups in society.
- Vital community services cannot be delivered without volunteers.

5.5 Challenges to Volunteering Infrastructure

- Lack of recognition of the levels, value and impact of volunteering across the public sector and also across Government Departments.
- Lack of research and insight on volunteering, e.g. current levels of volunteering, demographic breakdown of volunteering and impact of volunteering.
- A lack of resources to deliver communications campaigns on volunteering at the scale required, to raise the profile of volunteering, celebrate volunteering and encourage cross-sectorial dialogue.
- Cost of insurance.
- Funding levels are insufficient to address the capacity issues within VIOs and across our volunteering support infrastructure.

Such challenges are not insurmountable. However, they will require a considered, proportionate and collaborative response from government and the wider volunteering community. This Strategy seeks to fully integrate existing initiatives as well as examining new and innovative proposals such as those included in the CFI responses to overcome the challenges outlined above.

We need to have the structures and supports in place so that organisations are in a position to ask all our citizens - *'will you volunteer?'*

As a Volunteer I need to -

<p>Decide to Volunteer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be inspired to volunteer • Know what volunteering roles are out there • See a diversity of roles to find one that suits my interests • See a diversity of roles to suit my life - location, time requirements, etc. • Be asked to volunteer 	<p>Start Volunteering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find, apply for and get a role • Be made to feel welcome • Be listened to and matched to a volunteer role that's a good fit for my motivation • Know what I can expect from the organisation I volunteer with • Know what the organisation expects from me • Be inducted
<p>Stay Volunteering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be trained • Be supported and managed • Be thanked and valued • Not be out of pocket • Have my expectations met • Understand the impact I'm making • Feel included 	<p>Deal with Difficulties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a volunteer agreement • Have a code of conduct • Understand my rights • Have someone to go to for advice • Be able to make a complaint • Have a volunteer policy to refer to
<p>Leave</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to leave or end the relationship • Not feel negative about volunteering • Feel proud and happy with what I have achieved • Want to volunteer again • Feedback on experience • Recommend volunteering to others 	

5.6 Research

Capturing and promoting the quality of the volunteer experience is an important outcome for measuring success. Volunteer organisations consistently referred to the “meaningfulness” and “impactfulness” of activities as an important motivation in securing the continued participation and retention of volunteers in their Strategy submissions. Surveys, impact metrics and media engagement are a way to progress and measure such outcomes.

Ongoing research into the volunteering community is key to developing informed, evidence-based policy beyond the lifetime of this Strategy. Such studies will be enhanced through the continued collaboration between government, volunteering infrastructure and academic organisations.

The CFI identified several themes for further investigation in this regard, including an examination on the Social Return on Investment from volunteering activities, the role volunteering and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and maximising VIOs engagement with VCs.

6. Where we are and where are we going?

Top Tips for recruiting and retaining volunteers

- **Ask them** – People are waiting to be asked
- **Use wisely** – link opportunities with available skills
- **Communicate** – use all resources available to inform and recruit
- **Involve them** – there are no age limits to volunteering
- **Praise and reward** – Give acknowledgement

6.1 Strategic Objectives

Having considered our **vision** for the future of Irish volunteering, the **challenges** that vision poses and the guiding values by which we will proceed, and the next step is to examine how we will realise that vision.

This Strategy seeks to develop and enhance the role of the volunteer and encourage volunteering as a means of developing vibrant communities. To achieve this, it is necessary to view volunteering as an evolving concept influenced by the challenges the sector faces and changing socio-economic conditions.

Volunteering comes at a cost, and planning and investment is essential to further develop a dynamic and thriving volunteering culture. This Strategy will provide the framework and the building blocks to realise this vision, through the implementation of the following strategic objectives.

Strategic Objective 1:

The Strategy seeks to improve awareness of and increase participation in volunteering activities, particularly among those sections of our society that are currently underrepresented. It also seeks to reflect diversity in the volunteering sector and to integrate existing initiatives as well as adopting new and innovative ones.

1	<i>To increase participation and diversity in volunteering including embracing new trends and innovation</i>	Stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRCD • Volunteer Involving Organisations • Volunteer Centres • Volunteer Ireland • Other support organisations • Government Departments 		
In five years' time, we will see:	Action	Timescale	Responsible Body	
1. Greater diversity in who and how people volunteer	1.1 Introduce flexible volunteering options through the delivery of a time and skills match programme	Medium-term	VIOs	
2. The diversity in our communities and of people of different backgrounds and circumstances reflected more proportionately in the volunteering sector	2.1 Provide public information and more awareness programmes to enable people to volunteer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — from marginalised communities — from ethnic minorities — with disabilities 	Medium-term	VI/VCs VIOs DRCD D/Justice	
	2.2 Through Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities 2019-2024: Support and develop a sustainable model to support the community and voluntary sector, through: A multi-annual funding approach An appropriate cost-recovery model for programmes delivered by the C&V sector	Medium-Term	All Stakeholders	

	Core funding for autonomous community and local development		
	<p>2.3 Work in partnership with Sport Ireland to introduce newer forms of volunteer engagement that are ideally situated to modern times</p> <p>The National Sports Strategy 2018-2027 provides that:</p> <p>Sport Ireland will bring forward a volunteering strategy to consider issues around sports volunteering and how to grow the volunteering base</p> <p>A new annual volunteering training budget will be introduced to ensure that volunteer training can occur across sports</p> <p>Sport Ireland will work with the corporate sector to support volunteering in sport among employees to benefit employers as well as society at large</p> <p>Sport Ireland will oversee a process to have all stakeholders adopt the Governance Code for the Community, Voluntary and Charity Sector</p> <p>Sport Ireland will increase their investment to build the capacity of the sporting sector through supporting volunteering in sport.</p>	Medium-Term	DRCD Sport Ireland D/Tourism, Transport and Sport
	2.4 Deliver an educational programme in partnership with youth organisations to change the perception of volunteering among younger people	Medium - Term	VI/VCs
	2.5 Consult on a Youth Engagement strategy	Long-Term	D/Education D/Children
	2.6 More cohesion in the various online volunteering services –	Medium-Term	VI

	volunteering promotional portals to be interlinked.		The Wheel, Boardmatch etc. Studentvolunteer.ie
	2.7 Deliver engagement programme aimed specifically at potential volunteers reaching retirement and those over 55	Medium-Term	VI/VCS
3. An increase in the evidence base of the quantity and demographic breakdown of volunteers, contribution of volunteers and the value and benefits of volunteering individuals, groups and communities	3.1 National Survey on Volunteering	Medium-Term	All Stakeholders
4. There will be a stronger culture of volunteering, leading to a potential increase in our volunteering population	4.1 Run a “Tell a Friend about volunteering” campaign in conjunction with National Volunteer Week	Medium Term	VI / VIOs / VCS / Volunteers
	4.2 Promote/Fund a volunteer recruitment awareness campaign using existing structures and networks – National and Local campaigns	Medium Term	DRCD VI Local Authorities
	4.3 Support the introduction of a ‘pilot-project’ examining the potential for a ‘time-bank concept’ that allows individuals with specific skills and qualifications to volunteer hours that are then matched with the needs of VIOs e.g. accountants, tilers, etc.	Medium-Term	DRCD VI/VCS
	4.4 Undertake a pilot project for professional mentoring as a support to volunteers and	Medium Term	DRCD DBEI VI/VCS

	smaller volunteer involving organisations		Corporate Sector CSR Forum
	4.5 Support VIOs to introduce a task based volunteering as an alternative to role based volunteering where people can volunteer for a task as opposed to committing to a role	Medium-Term	VI/VCs VIOs

Strategic Objective 2:

This objective aims to have the best possible supports and infrastructure in place so that volunteering, volunteering infrastructure, volunteering involving organisations, volunteering supports and the volunteers are empowered in the work they do in our communities.

2	<i>To facilitate, develop and support the Volunteering Environment so that it contributes to vibrant and sustainable communities</i>	Stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRCD • Volunteer Involving Organisations • Volunteer Centres • Volunteer Ireland • Other support organisations • Government Departments • Corporate Sector 		
In five years' time, we will see:	Action	Timescale	Responsible Bodies	
1. National Volunteering Strategy	1.1 In partnership with stakeholders, deliver, implement and ongoing review of the Strategy	Long-term	DRCD led All Stakeholders	
2. More volunteers – who know how and when they can get involved	2.1 Support the ongoing development of the national volunteering database, I-VOL, (website and app) where individuals can easily find volunteering opportunities	Long-term	DRCD Volunteer Ireland Volunteer Centres Studentvolunteer.ie	
	2.2 Develop the potential for further volunteering partnerships between the corporate sector and community organisations through <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The delivery of an awareness programme aimed at companies highlighting the benefits of volunteering ; 2. Establish a forum for sharing best practice on employee volunteering, engaging community organisations so that the needs of the company, employee volunteers and the community organisation are all met; 3. Agree a third National Plan on CSR in consultation with the CSR Stakeholder Forum and in line with EU and 	Medium-term Short-term Medium-term	DBEI Chambers Ireland DRCD Volunteer Ireland Business in the Community Ireland CSR Forum Corporate Sector	

	international best practice on CSR policy 4. Working with the corporate sector to develop volunteering among employees.	Long-term	
	2.3 Explore the potential for a volunteering policy across the public sector	Long-term	DPER DRCD
	2.4 Develop a research-based toolkit for VCs/VIOs on how to develop volunteer programmes for young people		DRCD VI/VC's VIOs
	2.5 Develop programmes aimed at increasing the numbers of volunteers from under-represented groups	Long-term	DRCD VI's/VC's
	2.6 Invest in capacity building in VIOs through the delivery of a suite of training to Volunteer Managers	Short-term	DRCD VI's/VC's
3. A more streamlined Garda vetting system	3.1 Undertake an examination of the current Garda vetting process	Long-term	Garda Vetting Office
4. The cost of insurance issue highlighted	4.1 Ensure that the impact on volunteering arising from the cost of insurance is highlighted	Long Term	All Stakeholders
5. An increase in the quality of the volunteering experience for all stakeholders	5.1 Introduce a standard tiered code of conduct(s) for volunteer involving organisations, to offer protection and clarity on expectations of the volunteer and the VIO	Medium-term	VI/VCs
	5.2 Introduce a standard code of conduct for volunteers, to offer protection and clarity on expectations while volunteering	Medium-term	VI/VCs
	5.3 Provide a bursary fund to support volunteer involving organisations to build capacity in their organisations	Medium-term	DRCD VI
	5.4 Undertake a review to examine the requirement to introduce protections for	Long-term	VI

	volunteers e.g. in cases of bullying, discrimination or protected disclosures		
6. An increase in the capacity of the national volunteering infrastructure	6.1 Provide funding to Volunteer Centres and Volunteer Ireland in order for them to provide support and capacity building to volunteer involving organisations and volunteers	Medium-term	DRCD
	6.2 Upgrade the seven VISs to full VCs in order to provide a network of volunteering centres nationwide.	Short-term	DRCD Volunteer Ireland

Strategic Objective 3:

The Strategy wants all who volunteer to know their contribution is appreciated and valued and that volunteering is celebrated for its vital contribution to Irish society, developing communities as vibrant, inclusive and sustainable places where people want to live.

3	<p><i>To recognise, celebrate and communicate the value and impact of volunteers and volunteering in all its forms.</i></p>	<p>Stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRCD • Volunteer Involving Organisations • Volunteer Centres • Volunteer Ireland • Other support organisations • Government Departments 		
In five years' time, we will see:	Action	Timescale	Responsible Body	
1. An increased recognition of the value of volunteering	1.1 Explore the potential for the introduction of a formal qualification in recognition of the skills, knowledge and competencies acquired from volunteering	Long-term	D/Education	
	1.2 Further develop the IVOL database to include a 'volunteering passport' section that records the accredited skills and competencies of volunteers gained through volunteering roles	Medium-term	VI/VCS	
2. Volunteering is recognised and valued for the contribution it makes to Irish Society	2.1 Support Local and National Awards ceremonies that recognise the contribution and impact our volunteers, VIOs, community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises are making to society	Short-term	All Stakeholders	
	2.2 Explore the potential of the CSO regularly including a question on volunteering in their quarterly national household survey annually	Long-term	DRCD VI CSO	
	2.3 Inclusion of a question on volunteering as part of the 2021 Census of Population and beyond.	Short-term	DRCD VI CSO	
	2.4 Based on the data from the 2021 Census, develop a programme specifically targeted at underrepresented cohorts of volunteers	Long-term	VI / VC lead with support from all stakeholders	

	2.5 Conduct benchmarking exercises and peer reviews with other jurisdictions	Long-term	VI
3. An increased awareness among individuals, families and groups of how their skills, interests, talents and education can contribute to their community.	3.1 Develop a national communications strategy to include information campaigns at national, regional and local levels communicating the value, benefits and impact of volunteering to include targeted media campaigns focusing on specific areas of volunteering e.g. benefits for the unemployed, health benefits, community benefits, young people, older people	Medium-term	DRCD / VI lead with support from all stakeholders
	3.2 Deliver a co-ordinated national volunteering week campaign that engages all sectors of society	Short-term	VI lead with support from all stakeholders
4. Volunteering is recognised as a viable pathway to work	4.1 Promote volunteering to job seekers through the INTREO centres and social welfare offices	Short-term	DEASP VI

Strategic Objective 4:

Ethical and skills-based overseas volunteering can play an important role in delivering results for beneficiaries and in fostering Global Citizenship. A global citizen is someone who is aware of and understands our rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world - and their place in it. They take an active role in their community, and work with others to make the world more equal, fair and sustainable in the spirit of the SDGs.

4	<p><i>To promote ethical and skills-based overseas volunteering to deliver results for beneficiaries and to enhance Global Citizenship in Ireland.</i></p>	<p>Stakeholder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade • Department of Children and Youth Affairs • Irish Overseas Volunteer Sending Organisations • Comhlámh • Volunteer Ireland • Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) • Dóchas 		
In five years' time, we will see:	Action	Timescale	Responsible Body	
1. Ireland viewed as an example of international best practice in overseas volunteering.	1.1 Review the Irish Aid Volunteering Initiative (2013)	Short-term	DFA	
2. Sustained and expanded support for increased public awareness of our rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world	2.1 Engage with the EU in relation to the European Solidarity Corps	Long-term	D / Children and Youth Affairs and DFA	
	2.2 Support ethical and responsible overseas volunteering, including through the promotion of the Comhlámh Code of Good of Practice for overseas volunteer-sending organisations.	Long-term	DFA	

	2.3 Ensure that Ireland’s support to the UN Volunteer Programme reflects the geographic and policy priorities of <i>A Better World</i> , Ireland’s Policy for International Development	Long-term	DFA
	2.4 Explore the potential to expand the National Volunteer Database to include overseas volunteering opportunities.	Short-term	Volunteer Ireland and Comhlámh
	2.5 Revise travel advice to highlight issues and provide information for citizens to consider before engaging in overseas volunteering	Short-term	DFA

Strategic Objective 5:

This Strategy affirms the contribution of volunteering at local and national level and commits to developing a cooperative approach between public bodies and volunteering representatives in the advancement of coherent policy. This Strategy also acknowledges the importance of ongoing research into the volunteering community in developing informed, evidence-based policy beyond the lifetime of this document.

5	To improve policy coherence on Volunteering across Government both nationally and locally	Stakeholders:		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRCD • Volunteer Involving Organisations • Volunteer Centres • Volunteer Ireland • Other support organisations • Government Departments 		
In five years' time, we will see:	Action	Timescale	Responsible Body	
1. Greater understanding among public representatives, policy makers and decision makers of the impact of volunteering	1.1 Examine the scope to carry out an impact assessment on volunteering prior to introducing local and national strategies, legislation, programmes and schemes that include VIOs or volunteers as part of the implementation.	Medium-Term	All Stakeholders	
	1.2 Commission a report on the economic and social value and impact of volunteering on our economy	Medium-Term	VI/VCS	
2. An increase in the capacity of volunteer involving organisations	2.1 Examine the scope to reduce the cost of compliance and administrative burden of regulation, insofar as possible, in order to free up resources for volunteering	Medium-Term	All Stakeholders	
	2.2 Provide on-going guidance and support to VIOs on a range of issues such as volunteer management/leadership,	Medium-Term	VI/VCS	
	2.3 Provide a shared "volunteer manager" service to volunteer involving organisations	Medium Term	VI/VCS VIOs	
	2.4 Provide training on good governance to volunteer board members, as well as matching service to recruit new board members	Medium Term	DRCD VI/VCS Boardmatch	

	2.5 Support volunteer involving organisations to create more diverse roles e.g. short-term, virtual, micro-, one-off and episodic volunteering	Medium-Term	VI/VCS VIOs
	2.6 Provide networking and peer-to-peer learning opportunities for volunteer managers	Medium Term	VI/VCS
3. Supports for all VIOs to implement and raise awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals	3.1 Develop toolkits to develop and proof plans against SDGs. Support capacity in VIOs in relation to SDGs.	Medium Term	All Stakeholders

7. How will we get there?

Following on from the agreed Strategic Objectives, an Implementation Plan will include Key Performance indicators, Timescales and Responsible Bodies and will determine the way forward from which critical success factors and measurable progress indicators will emerge. Interim and annual reviews will also be a component of the Implementation Plan.

7.1 Implementation and Monitoring

The implementation of this Strategy will require the same partnership approach to that used in the development of the Strategy. All the partners and stakeholders have a role to play in realising the shared vision we have for volunteering. The Strategy will be implemented in partnership with all the stakeholders over the next five years. While Government will play a lead role in the delivery of many of the actions, this will be done collaboratively with stakeholders across the sector.

To deliver on the implementation of this Strategy, we will:

1. Develop an implementation plan that provides for ongoing appraisal of implementation progress and overall impact of delivery;
2. Establish a Volunteering Strategy Implementation Group, chaired by the Department of Rural and Community Development, with representation from other relevant Government Departments, Public Bodies and Stakeholders; and
3. Publish annual updates on the implementation of this policy.

7.2 Evaluation

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will allow us to determine the impact and also to review and refocus the Strategy over the five year period, where necessary. Appropriate mechanisms will be needed to monitor and evaluate progress and these will be developed as part of the implementation plan. At a high level, we consider the following outcomes as important indicators in measuring the success and impact of the Strategy.

- Greater awareness – people know how their skills, time and talents can contribute to healthy and resilient communities.
- More volunteers – people know how and when they can get involved
- The value of volunteering to individuals – people are aware that through volunteering they can achieve personal development goals as well as improving their health and wellbeing e.g. practicing a language, learning new skills, working as part of a team, feeling part of a community
- Helping to shape communities – communities are shaped and influenced through volunteer involvement
- Organisational capacity – volunteer involving organisations grow their capacity through targeting skills and talents of volunteers for specific roles and are trained in volunteer management
- Multi-sectoral Leadership – a forum is established for engagement, planning and delivery of CSR projects
- A thriving volunteer support infrastructure that meets the needs of both VIOs and volunteers
- Public Policy – government policy is developed following consideration of the impact on volunteering

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Membership of the National Advisory Group

Appendix 2 – Impact of Volunteering

Appendix 3 – Foróige Consultation

Appendix 4 - Abbreviations

Appendix 5 - Bibliography

Appendix 1: Membership of the National Advisory Group

Chair:

Seán Canney, Minister of State Community Development, Natural Resources and Digital Development

Members:

Ciara Bates	Department of Rural and Community Development
Deirdre Kearney	Department of Rural and Community Development
Deborah Dignam	Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation
Roisin Barr	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
Conor O'Malley	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Cormac Judge	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
Orla McBreen	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Carina Connellan	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Sarah Cooney	Department of Health
Eibhlin Byrne	Department of Justice and Equality
Brian O'Malley	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Peter Hogan	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
Cian Galvin	Alone
Inspector James Calvin	An Garda Síochána
Shane Mulchrone	Business in the Community Ireland
Lucia Canavan	Cope Galway
Denis O'Brien	Foróige
Margot Kenny	Harold's Cross Hospice
Colm O'Hehir	Irish Association of Universities
Frank Murtagh	Irish Local Development Network
Seamus Boland	Irish Rural Link
Paula Butler	Local Government Management Agency
Brigid Geoghegan	Public Participation Networks
Una May	Sport Ireland
Deirdre Garvey	The Wheel
Tricia Nolan	Volunteer Centre Managers
Nina Arwitz	Volunteer Ireland
Mary Fitzgerald	Volunteer of the Year

Appendix 2: Impact of volunteering

A 2018 survey of volunteers that saw 1,735 responses, asked about the impact of volunteering on the individual. As a result of volunteering, respondents reported as follows:

	Significantly Increased	Increased	Stayed the Same	Decreased	Significantly Decreased
Confidence in my own abilities	22% (370)	49% (825)	27% (456)	1% (22)	1% (14)
Sense of self-esteem	21% (348)	48% (804)	29% (493)	1% (18)	1% (12)
Feeling of making a useful contribution to the community	33% (561)	49% (818)	15% (256)	1% (23)	1% (17)
My interpersonal skills e.g. communication, working with others etc.	24% (408)	45% (750)	29% (485)	1% (14)	1% (16)
My employability and skills	20% (334)	39% (657)	39% (654)	1% (16)	1% (12)
My ability to advance in my current employment	15% (256)	29% (488)	54% (893)	1% (21)	1% (11)
Sense of motivation	23% (377)	50% (818)	24% (397)	2% (33)	1% (16)
My physical health and wellbeing	16% (289)	35% (592)	47% (794)	1% (17)	0% (8)
My mental health and well-being	19% (316)	43% (722)	36% (605)	1% (24)	0% (6)
My range of friendships	17% (291)	44% (736)	37% (626)	1% (11)	0% (6)
My participation in social gatherings	14% (238)	39% (647)	45% (758)	1% (23)	0% (6)
My willingness to get involved in local activities	17% (292)	49% (815)	32% (531)	1% (22)	1% (11)
My interest in doing more volunteering	22% (364)	52% (864)	23% (382)	3% (44)	1% (15)
My sense of belonging to the community	19% (309)	48% (794)	31% (521)	2% (30)	1% (16)
A feeling of being included and not alone	19% (316)	51% (832)	27% (447)	2% (25)	1% (16)

Appendix 3: Foróige Consultation

What does volunteering mean to you?

Helping some of the most vulnerable people in society.	Developing as a person, learning and upskilling.
Giving up your own time for a good cause.	Being part of a community/sense of belonging.
Allowing clubs and your local environment to thrive.	Sharing a common interest with others.
Changing the world for the better.	New opportunities.
Becoming a role model.	Self-fulfilment.

Q. How do young people currently volunteer?

Through youth organisations.	Sponsored walks/runs.
With local sports clubs by fundraising.	Mentoring.
Work experience.	Community Development Groups.
Visiting nursing homes.	Transition year.
Animal sanctuaries.	Peaceful protest.
Helping local community e.g. Meals on wheels, tidy towns.	Charity events e.g. Movember/Shave or dye

Q. What do communities get from volunteering?

Greater community spirit.	Closer relationships.
Improved quality of life.	Less antisocial behaviour.
Breaks down barriers.	Tidy towns.

Q. What do 'The Beneficiaries' get from volunteering?

Benefit by funds raised for charities and their activities.	Nicer surroundings e.g. Tidy Towns
Social Inclusion	Organised sporting activities
Elderly people feel less lonely and are more connected to young people.	

Q. What do volunteers get from volunteering?

Awareness of social problems.	Life skills.
Self-confidence.	Opportunities
Friendships.	Activities.

Q. What are the challenges or barriers to volunteering for young people?

Costs of volunteering.	Public Transport, especially in rural areas.	Lack of information about volunteering opportunities.
Not enough use of social media.	Assumption that volunteering is mainly for older people.	Lack of understanding from parents.
Not enough spare time.	Not realising the benefits of volunteering.	Lack of confidence.
Age restrictions.	Garda Vetting.	Lack of resources.
No Incentive.	Young people feel like they're being taken advantage of.	Not being able to volunteer with people your own age group.
Stigma about volunteering	Volunteers feel taken for granted	

Q. What supports do young people need to get involved in volunteering?

More recognition for the work that they do.	More publicity on social media, particularly Instagram.	Reimbursement of travel costs.
More opportunities to volunteer in rural areas.	Better public transport.	Carpool system for volunteering.
Spread awareness of the Volunteer Ireland app.	Young people need other young people to promote volunteering.	More encouragement.
Credits in schools for volunteering.	Grants for volunteering.	Grants for charities that focus on young people.
More school volunteering programs.	Tailor certain volunteering activities for young people.	Youth ambassadors for volunteering.
First aid training	Better information for parents of volunteers.	More transition year volunteering programmes.

Q. What volunteering opportunities would you like to see available to young people over the next 5 years?

More varied and flexible volunteering roles.	Opportunities to volunteer through school.	More training available for young people.
Charities need to be more open to youth involvement.	More opportunities to volunteer abroad.	Opportunities to work with homeless people.
More online resources.	Advertisement campaigns on YouTube, Netflix and Instagram.	Promote the benefits of volunteering.
More Irish language volunteering.	More reference panels or similar forums.	A clear information pathway.

Appendix 4: Abbreviations

- CFI – Call for Input
- CSO – Central Statistics Office
- CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility
- CV – Curriculum Vitae
- CVS – Community and Voluntary Sector
- D/Children – Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- D/Education – Department of Education and Skills
- D/Justice – Department of Justice and Equality
- DBEI - Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation
- DEASP – Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
- DFA – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- DPER – Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
- DRCD – Department of Rural and Community Development
- EU – European Union
- GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation
- I-VOL – National Volunteering Database
- QNHS – Quarterly National Household Survey
- SDG – Sustainable Development Goal
- UN – United Nations
- VC – Volunteer Centre
- VI – Volunteer Ireland
- VIO – Volunteer Involving Organisation
- VIS – Volunteer Information Services

Appendix 5: Bibliography

The following documents may be of interest:

- Central Statistics Office, Quarterly National Household Survey, (2013)
<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/q-vwb/qnhsvolunteeringandwellbeingq32013/>
- Centre for Effective Services (CES), 'Commissioning in Human, Social and Community Services - A Rapid Evidence Review' (2015)
<https://www.per.gov.ie/en/commissioning/>
- Creative Ireland Programme 2017-2020 Full details of the *Creative Ireland Programme / Clár Éire Ildánach*: <https://www.creativeireland.gov.ie/en>
- Crowe Horwath Ireland and The Wheel, 'A Portrait of Ireland's Non-profit Sector' (2014)
<https://www.wheel.ie/sites/default/files/Portrait%20of%20the%20Non-Profit%20Sector%202014%20UpdateJun2014.pdf>
- Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI), 'Towards Responsible Business: Ireland's National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility' (2017-2020)
<https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Towards-Responsible-Business-Ireland%E2%80%99s-National-Plan-CSR-2017-2020.pdf>
- Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG), 'Working Group Report on Citizen Engagement with Local Government' (2014)
<https://drcd.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/Citizen-Engagement.pdf>
- Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD), Statement of Strategy (2017-2020)
<https://drcd.gov.ie/about/>
- Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, 'White Paper on a Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity and for Developing the Relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary sector' (2000)
<https://drcd.gov.ie/community/volunteering/>

- European Economic and Social Committee, 'Communication on EU Policies and Volunteering: Recognising and Promoting Cross-border Voluntary Activities in the EU' (2012)
http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/opinion_28_march_2012_final_en.pdf
- European Youth Forum, 'Charter on the Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers' (2012)
http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/volunteering_charter_en.pdf
- GHK Consulting Limited, 'Volunteering in the European Union' (2010)
http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1018_en.pdf
- GHK Consulting Limited, 'Study on Volunteering in the European Union Country Report: Ireland' (2010)
http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ie_en.pdf
- GHK Consulting Limited, 'Study on Volunteering in the European Union Country Report: United Kingdom' (2010)
http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_uk_en.pdf
- Governance Code Working Group, 'Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland' (2012)
<https://www.governancecode.ie>
- Government of Ireland, 'A Programme for a Partnership Government' (2016)
https://www.merrionstreet.ie/MerrionStreet/en/ImageLibrary/Programme_for_Partnership_Government.pdf
- Government of Ireland, 'Brighter Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014-2020'
<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/775847-better-outcomes-brighter-futures/>
- Government of Ireland, 'National Sports Policy' (2018 – 2027)
<http://www.dttas.ie/sites/default/files/publications/sport/english/national-sports-policy-2018-2027/national-sports-policy-2018.pdf>

- Government of Ireland, 'Our Communities: A Framework Policy for Local and Community Development in Ireland' (2015)
<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/b2d370-framework-policy-for-local-community-development-in-ireland/>
- Greater Shepparton City Council, 'Greater Shepparton Volunteer Strategy and Action Plan' (2014-2018)
http://greatershepparton.com.au/assets/files/documents/community/volunteer/Volunteer_Strategy_and_Action_Plan_2014_-_2018.pdf
- Indecon International Economic Consultants, 'Registered Irish Charities: Social and Economic Impact Report' (2018)
<https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/media/1489/social-and-economic-impact-report-2018.pdf>
- Indecon International Economic Consultants, 'Assessment of Economic Impact of Sport in Ireland' (2010)
https://www.sportireland.ie/Research/Economic_Impact_of_Sport_2010_/Indecon.pdf
- Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020
<http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PB19000173>
- National Centre for Social Research and Institute for Volunteering Research [UK], 'Helping Out: A national survey of volunteering and charitable giving' (2007)
http://dobrovolnictvo.sk/_subory/helping_out_national_survey_2007.pdf
- National Committee on Volunteering, 'Tipping the Balance' (2002)
<https://drcd.gov.ie/community/volunteering/>
- National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland 2019-2022
<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/a416b4-national-social-enterprise-policy-for-ireland-2019-2022/>
- National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI), 'Lending a Hand: A Report on Young People and Volunteering in Ireland' (2011)
http://www.youth.ie/volunteer_report

- Research Matters Limited, 'Indicative Baseline Assessment of Corporate Social Responsibility in Ireland' (2017)
<http://www.csrhub.ie/research/indicative-baseline-report.pdf>
- Sport Ireland, full details of the Sport Ireland Statement of Strategy can be found at:
https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/2019-10/sport-ireland-statement-of-strategy-2018-2022_0.pdf
- Sport Ireland, findings from the Irish Sports Monitor 2019 can be found at:
<https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/2019-11/ism-2019-mid-year-report-final.pdf>
- Student Volunteer Ireland, link:
<https://www.studentvolunteer.ie/>
- Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities: A Five-Year Strategy to Support the Community and Voluntary Sector in Ireland 2019-2024
<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d8fa3a-sustainable-inclusive-and-empowered-communities-a-five-year-strategy/>
- The Wheel, 'Let's Commission For Communities: Valuing the Community and Voluntary Approach to Human, Social and Community Services' (2016)
https://www.wheel.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/2018-07/Comissioning%20for%20Communities%20Report%202016%20Web2_0.pdf
- The Wheel, 'Stronger Charities, Stronger Communities: Strategic Plan' (2017-2020)
<https://www.wheel.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/2018-07/The%20Wheel%20Strategy%202017%20-%202020.pdf>
- Volunteer Canada, 'The Canadian Code for Volunteering Involvement' (2017)
https://volunteer.ca/vdemo/ResearchAndResources_DOCS/Volunteer_Canada_Canadian_Code_for_Volunteer_Involvement_2017.pdf
- Volunteer Development Agency, 'It's All About Time: Volunteering in Northern Ireland' (2007)
<http://www.volunteernow.co.uk/fs/doc/publications/itsallabouttimefullreport2007.pdf>

- Volunteer Ireland, 'Connecting Communities Through Volunteering: Strategic Plan' (2018-2022)
<https://www.volunteer.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Volunteer-Ireland-Strategic-FINAL.pdf>
- Volunteer Ireland and NUI Galway, 'Rural Volunteerism: Impacting Development and Sustainability' (2018)
<https://www.volunteer.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Rural-Volunteerism-Report.pdf>
- Volunteer Ireland, 'The Impact of Volunteering on the Health and Well-Being of the Volunteer' (2017)
https://www.volunteer.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Volunteer_Ireland-Report_FINAL.pdf
- Volunteer Ireland, 'What rights do I have as a volunteer' (2017)
https://www.volunteer.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Volunteer_Rights_FINAL.pdf
- Volunteer Now [Northern Ireland], 'Connect, Build, Change: Strategic Plan' (2017-2020)
<http://volunteernow.co.uk/fs/doc/publications/volunteer-now-strategic-plan-2017-20201.pdf>
- Volunteering South Australia and Northern Territory, 'Volunteering Strategy for South Australia' (2014-2020)
http://www.savolunteeringstrategy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/VSSA_StrategyDocument_ver1.pdf