

**SUBMISSION following**  
**Call for Input (CFI) on Key Aspects to be included in a**  
**National Volunteering Strategy**  
(The closing date for submissions is Thursday, 14 February 2019.)

**Organisation/Individual: Community Work Ireland**

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**SUBMISSION**

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	<b>Section 4: Definition of Volunteering</b>
1	Should we adopt the White Paper definition or the European Union definition of volunteering? Is there a more appropriate definition which could be considered for the purpose of the strategy?
	<p>The two definitions are similar, and we would propose using the European Union definition in order to ensure alignment with European partners</p> <p><b>The values adopted by the National Framework for Local and Community Development Cross-Sectional Working Group should also underpin the Volunteering Strategy with an emphasis on the right to participate that goes beyond the current narrow understanding of ‘volunteering’. See below for further on this</b></p>

	<b>Section 5: Background on Irish Volunteering</b>
2	Do you agree with the outline of the Department’s role in volunteering? What additions or amendments would you suggest?
	<p>The key point for Community Work Ireland is that a very clear distinction needs to be made between people that undertake work to address poverty, social exclusion and inequality on a voluntary basis (such as those that serve on boards of Traveller organisations, women’s organisations, domestic violence organisations) and those that ‘volunteer’ to raise funds for a good cause etc but without a positive social change agenda. The former group tends to work on a voluntary over a long period of time compared to the latter that tend to be once-off or periodic. While the latter group provides an essential service to communities, the former is the group is the one that CWI believes needs enhanced recognition of the role and support.</p>

	<b>Section 6: A Vision for the Future of Irish Volunteering</b>
3	Do you agree with this vision for the purposes of this strategy? If not, what should our vision be?
	CWI suggests that the term ‘volunteering’ is not useful and should be replaced by ‘activities undertaken on a voluntary basis’

	<b>Section 7: Objectives of a Volunteering Strategy</b>
4	What objectives for Irish volunteering should be set for the purposes of this strategy?
	<p>The only supports provided to people undertaking work to address poverty, social exclusion and inequality on a voluntary basis are through the volunteer centres but many do not engage with those centres. There needs to be an objective that identifies and supports this cohort outside of the volunteer centres.</p>

	<b>Section 8: The Volunteering Community</b>
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5	What is the role of the public in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?
	<b>As above, there needs to be a distinction between the casual volunteer and those that engage in work to address poverty, social exclusion and inequality on a voluntary basis. The role varies considerably and there needs to be recognition of the diversity that exists in relation to role, function, approach, motivation, ethos, values etc. and therefore should not be conflated with the role of the public</b>
6	What is the role of the VIOs in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?
	<b>Civil society would not exist if it were not for people that undertake work on a voluntary basis. The organisations that depend on this cohort need to be supported to support those that undertake work on a voluntary basis in their organisations, for example the provision of funding to provide training,</b>
7	Should the role of volunteer supporting infrastructure be expanded for the purposes of this strategy?
	The volunteering centres and infrastructure are largely focused on the casual volunteer and specific supports need to be provided to the cohort of concern to CWI
8	Is the current model adequate? If not, what volunteering infrastructure and funding model would best support the development of volunteering?
	There needs to be a specific stream of support for the cohort as outlined above
9	How can Volunteer Centres, Volunteer Ireland and PPNs work together to develop volunteering, active citizenship and participation in the community?
	Volunteer Centres, Volunteer Ireland and PPNs do not undertake community development and this needs to be explicit within the strategy.
10	How can the Department facilitate co-operation between Volunteer Centres, Volunteer Ireland and the PPNs?
11	Are there other areas of research that could be included?
12	What is the role of local authorities in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?
13	What is the role of central Government (outside the Department of Rural and Community Development) in volunteering for the purposes of this strategy?
14	How could the Department further facilitate engagement between the business sector and volunteering?
15	What steps can the Department and other stakeholders take to enhance engagement with European and international partners in volunteering?
16	What other relevant stakeholders, if any, should be considered in developing a volunteering strategy to support volunteering in Ireland?

	<b>Section 9: Governance and Funding</b>
17	Do you agree with the approach outlined above? If not, please provide reasons.
	Yes
18	Do you agree with the approach outlined above? If not, please provide reasons.

	<b>Section 10: Challenges to Volunteering</b>
19	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering?
20	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to raise awareness of volunteering opportunities?
21	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage general participation in volunteering?
22	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage the participation of young people in volunteering?
	CWI would like to see initiatives that support young people to engage in work to address poverty, social exclusion and inequality. Supports to enhance capacity and consciousness raising would be useful, as would the identification of pathways to engage with organisations that share the values of the young person
23	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage the participation of marginalised groups in volunteering?
	As above. This should start with an acknowledgement of the difficulties, including discrimination, faced by many marginalised communities. Opportunities should focus on activity to address their own situations on a voluntary basis

24	Should the strategy seek to focus on or identify particular marginalised group(s) to encourage their participation in volunteering?
	Yes – along the nine grounds of the Equality legislation and include socio-economic exclusion
25	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to mitigate the risks posed by the changing demographic of volunteers?
26	What specific audiences should the national volunteering strategy focus on?

27	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage training and development opportunities for volunteers?
	Funding and supports need to be directly provided to organisations working from a community work approach to address poverty, social exclusion and inequality to support their current and future volunteers
28	In what other ways can the Department support enhanced volunteer performance in Irish volunteering?
29	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage training and development opportunities for volunteer managers?
30	What steps may be taken by the Department to support enhanced management performance in Irish volunteering?
31	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to address the perception of volunteering involving too large a commitment of time?
32	Should a volunteering code of conduct for volunteers and volunteer involving organisations (VIOs) be developed and implemented? What should this code include?
	Yes – but these needs to ensure that it meets the needs of organisations and is not a one-size-fits-all approach
33	Should a potential Irish code of conduct for volunteers and VIOs be mandatory or optional? Who would regulate it?
34	What particular challenges are facing smaller volunteer involving organisations and how can the Department assist?
35	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to facilitate QQI assessment of volunteers for the purposes of accrediting skills?
	Exploring the options and producing a position paper for consultation
36	What actions should be included in a volunteering strategy to encourage the creation of volunteering opportunities?
37	What other significant challenges to volunteering should be considered as part of this strategy? How can they be addressed?

38	Are there any further challenges, strategic objectives and actions that you feel should be included in a national volunteering strategy?

	<b>Section 11: Monitoring, Measuring and Evaluating the Impact of Volunteering</b>
39	What criteria should be used to assess our progress in assessing the impacts of volunteering?
40	What criteria should be used to gauge success in delivery of the National Volunteering Strategy?

	<b>Section 12: Proposed National Advisory Group on Volunteering</b>
41	Do you agree that a National Advisory Group is the most suitable vehicle to drive this strategy forward?
42	Who should participate in a National Advisory Group?
43	How broad should the terms of reference (TOR) be for the proposed Advisory Group or other mechanism found suitable to drive this strategy forward?
44	Does any better mechanism exist to drive this strategy forward?