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Innovating volunteer work

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- Supporting local and regional governments in developing a new vision on the role of volunteer work in their area.

Organisations and governments ask us to set up projects which cater to their specific needs. Within a set time limit and budget we produce the results we agreed on: a new shared vision (for example through workshops), new skills (for example through training), and new ways of working which fit the changing needs of the organisation and their environment (for example through redesigning jobs and structures). All projects aim at improving the quality of the volunteer work for the volunteers themselves and the people they work for.

5 Areas of expertise:

1. Social participation (projects aimed at improving the participation of groups through volunteer work)
2. Diversity (projects aimed at working together by people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds)
3. Organizational development (projects aimed at reaching a new fit between organisation and environment through improvement of organizational skills)
4. Quality care (projects which look at the way organisations produce their results, aimed specifically at continuous improvement)
5. The care sector (projects specifically for volunteers in the care sector).

Recent innovative projects

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Examples of recent innovative projects are:

Free Flex

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At the moment there are five Free Flex agencies in Holland.

Portfolio and certification

Another innovative project involves volunteers to describe their experiences in a portfolio they can use in their career. Making a portfolio learns volunteers to formulate their volunteer work in terms that are valued in interviews for paid work.

Certification takes portfolio one step further. Volunteer experience is valued in terms of formal education. This makes it possible for volunteers to shorten their education by using volunteer experience to get educational credits. SVM is starting certification experiments in cooperation with volunteer organisations, volunteer centers and adult education institutes.

More information?

For more information please contact Joost Heinsius or Saskia van Grinsven at:

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Dutch Foundation for Volunteer Management, Mailbox 12080, 3501 AB Utrecht, the Netherlands.

sVM and portfolio building

I n n o v a t o r v a n V r i j w i l l i g e r s w e r k

Innovation in the field of voluntary work

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Working with volunteers is different from working with paid employees. It requires different tools, which are not always at hand. The Dutch Foundation for Volunteer Management (sVM) is one of two national organisations that support Dutch voluntary work. Our mission is innovation and quality improvement in the field of voluntary work. sVM is constantly developing new tools. For example for involving new target groups in volunteer work, such as young people and immigrants. Portfolio building is one of these tools.

Portfolio for Dutch Scouts

Certification and assessment of skills and competencies developed in volunteer work is relatively new in Holland. As a first step sVM developed a system for portfolio building for Dutch Scouting. Last year the first group of 15 Scouts made their own personal dossier. The portfolio contains the systematic description of activities and projects in Scouting and other volunteer work, together with documentation on formal education, jobs, hobbies and relevant experiences in other areas. Some portfolio-holders leave it at that. But for most this is the raw material that gives them a clearer view on their core-qualities and new impulses for the development of a personal *actionplan*. Participants are enthusiastic about their results, have discovered new competencies, and feel more confident and better prepared for job-interviews.

Most people need some form of *coaching* in getting through the task of portfolio building. Especially when it comes to reflecting on experiences and becoming aware of competencies. The coaching process involves five steps:

1. Information and instruction
2. Inventory and classification of relevant data
3. Reflecting on qualities and competencies
4. Collecting evidence
5. Putting together a personal actionplan

Together with CINOP (Centre for Innovation of Education), sVM developed a special *training* scheme for portfolio-coaches. The coaches in Scouting are volunteers themselves, mostly students or professionals with a background in education or social work.

New target-groups

Portfolio building, a method that helps people to reflect on different kinds of learning experiences and raises awareness of qualities and competencies, is an ideal instrument to use in reintegration projects. sVM developed a special version of the portfolio for clients with a history of long-term unemployment. The instrument was tested in five pilotprojects involving about 50 clients, with a success-rate far above average compared to similar projects.

Results

As a result of these pilot-studies the following tools are now available:

- A *standard portfolio* for use in volunteer-organisations
- A portfolio for *clients in reintegration-projects*
- A training and manual for *portfolio-coaches*.

More information?

For more information please contact Els Hofman at:

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Training in Volunteer Management

I n n o v a t o r v a n V r i j w i l l i g e r s w e r k

Do you have the following questions?

How can we successfully recruit and select volunteers?

How can we keep volunteers in our organisation?

How can we lead volunteers?

How can we define which tasks can be done by volunteers?

How can we formulate a volunteer policy?

Then this training might be of interest for you!

The importance of volunteer work

Volunteer work is an important resource for improving the well being of communities. In many Eastern European countries the needs are less and less covered by governments and people depend more and more upon resources in the civic society. Volunteers can make an important contribution in the field of health protection, mental health, social welfare, education, care for elderly and disabled persons, environmental development etc. The presence of volunteers in organisations can significantly improve the quality of institutional care. Some volunteer organisations are advocacy groups or pressure groups and therefore an instrument of civic expression which contributes to the development of democracy. Furthermore, volunteer work spreads the idea of solidarity, volunteers can bridge ethnic, social, religious and other differences.

Challenges to take

So volunteer work is important. It demands organisation, support and management. Especially since society is changing so rapidly: growing individualism, commercialisation, decreasing governmental support etc. These changes are influencing (potential) volunteers and thus organisations who work with volunteers. Many organisations wonder how to make the input of volunteers more effective for their organisational objectives.

Content and methodology of the training

The Dutch Foundation for Volunteer Management has developed a training in which the above questions are covered. Elements of organisational development and volunteer management will take part of this training amongst subjects like Management of Motivation, volunteer policy, recruitment and selection and different styles of leadership.

The training is given by an experienced trainer with international training experience. Theory, individual and group exercises and several tests are all taking part of this training. Participants also have the opportunity to bring new theories and models into practise.

In co-operation with your organisation this training can be tailor-made for your unique situation and takes two or three days.

Interested?

Are you interested in this training 'Volunteer Management'? Or do you have questions? Please contact Saskia van Grinsven, trainer/consultant, at:
Tel. ++31 30 233 39 37. Or send an e-mail to : s.vgrinsven.svm@svmgroep.nl.

sVM

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the Netherlands

The Dutch Foundation for Volunteer Management

The Dutch Foundation for Volunteer Management is a national service organisation with two main objectives. On one hand the developing of innovative projects in the volunteer sector and improving the position of the volunteer sector in society. On the other hand the innovation and improvement of the organisational skills of non-profit organisations. The activities of our organisation can be divided in two groups: organisation development and project development.

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stap twee

Op weg naar intercultureel vrijwilligerswerk is stap één gezet. Het is nu tijd voor 'Stap Twee': daadwerkelijk actie ondernemen. Stap Twee is een initiatief van Forum, NOV en SVM.

Now it's time for 'Stage Two'

The inter-culturalisation of
volunteer organisations

Stages in the inter-culturalisation of volunteer organisations.

- Stage I
 - Voluntary work becomes aware of the ethnic diversity of its environment.
 - Looking for information about and meeting with minorities.
 - Minorities are a new group that can affiliate itself with the existing 'traditional' offer of organisations.
 - Minorities are expected to adjust. Thinking is dominated by us-them terms.

Stages in the inter-culturalisation of volunteer organisations.

- Stage II
 - The minority is not a consumer, but a client.
 - The wishes and needs of other people are taken into account. The possibilities are geared for this new group, such as: translation of the folders, special consultation hours, a minority volunteer or professional is taken on specifically for this group. Organisation, structure and culture hardly change.

Stages in the inter-culturalisation of volunteer organisations.

- Stage III
- Voluntary work organisations have discovered that the solution lies in a change of their own organisation, by diversifying the constitution of unpaid and paid co-workers and management, by changing the way people communicate and internal communication. The minority is no longer seen as a consumer or a client, but as human capital.

Project 'Stage Two'

- Stage Two is a project that is subsidised by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport for five years.
- The Dutch Organisation for Volunteers, The Foundation Management of Volunteers and Forum (information centre for minority issues) have developed the project and are responsible for its implementation.

Project 'Stage Two'

- Objective I
 - To stimulate volunteer organisations (and their support structure) to inter-culturalise their program. To stimulate the local government in making inter-culturalisation an integral part of their policy on voluntary work

Objective I

- Results
 - all of the organisations have been informed
 - a large number of organisations that are at stage 1 have taken initiatives in the municipalities where a policy on voluntary work is developed to include inter-culturalisation

Project 'Stage Two'

Objective II

- To optimise the offers of support to volunteer organisations in the field of inter-cultural co-operation

Objective II

Results:

- data bank of all the projects and initiatives
- the support structure is able to effectively support volunteer organisations in the inter-culturalisation of their programs

Objective III

- To support the volunteer organisations with the inter-culturalisation of the organisation and the recruitment of minority co-workers in four regions

Objective III

Results

- A number of volunteer organisations is able to adjust their organisation to an inter-cultural working organisation
- The percentage of minority co-workers has significantly increased
- Best practices are available to everybody
- Through her policy on subsidies, the government lays down conditions to the composition of the staff and the field of voluntary work

Are you trendy?

These 10 trends we see happening in the near future. We? The 2 national organisations supporting volunteer work: sVM, Foundation for Volunteer Management and NOV, organiser of this conference.

Do you see the same trends happening?
We would like to know your view...

Top 10 trends:

1. Hedonism and consumerism are growing, but also the need for reciprocity and collective experiences
2. The lifelong fixed identity disappears, but the need to find something of your own grows
3. Informatisation: all knowledge is becoming available at anytime anywhere, the passing on of information is no longer depending on local organisations
4. Higher quality demands from governments, volunteers and customers; do they lead to growing professionalization and are volunteers willing to go along?
5. Is there a growing gap between rich and poor in volunteer country, between possession of knowledge and not having access to knowledge? Will volunteer work be only for those who are excluded?

6. Globalisation leads also to localisation: to keep people involved volunteer work is transformed into close-to-home pieces and bits
7. There will be more intertwining of volunteer work and other sectors: politics, commercial sector and others
8. The present physical forms of organisations will disappear, organisations will be more and more brokers between people with the same field of interest
9. Time becomes more fluent: clear separations between time to work, time to care, free time and volunteer time disappear
10. The growing recognition of diversity of people asks for skills in dealing with differences. At the same time people look for orderly organisations with likeminded people

What is your top 3 of these trends?

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Which trend did we miss completely?

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Thank you! Your information helps us to watch trends and translate them for volunteer work.

The following information is also useful for us:

Your nationality:

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Your name:

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Organisation:

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