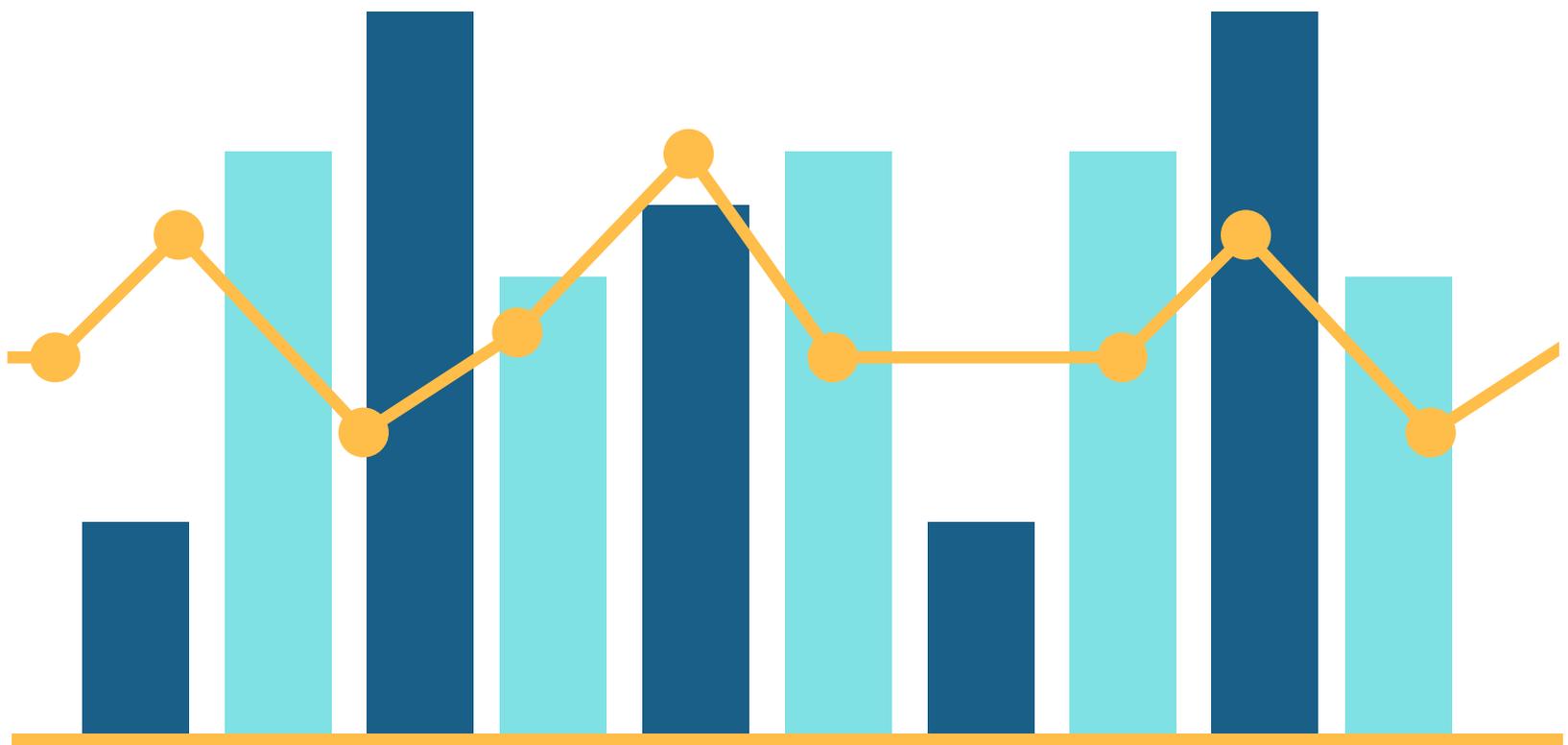


Invest for Success

The Real Value of Volunteering

Maximising
volunteer involvement:
A guide for funders, fundraisers
and volunteer-involving organisations



Scottish
Volunteering
Forum



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

This guide was written by a sub-group of the Scottish Volunteering Forum.

The Scottish Volunteering Forum is a non-constituted group of volunteer managers and other key stakeholders who are passionate about volunteering in Scotland. It has over 30 members and meets several times a year to discuss recent developments regarding volunteering, and to facilitate positive change. It also has several sub-groups that take forward activity around key priorities identified by the Forum. We all participate in the Forum on a voluntary basis.

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Introduction

We at the Scottish Volunteering Forum are acutely aware of the important role of volunteering in Scotland. It creates social connections, improves wellbeing, supports the prevention of key social issues and enhances the role of paid staff in delivering a number of vital services.

Unfortunately, we often find that volunteering is not afforded the value or recognition that it deserves. Despite all of the significant benefits detailed in this guide, we find that volunteering activity is routinely left out of the strategic planning stage by funders, funding recipients and policy makers, which often means that it is under-resourced and under-measured.

The Scottish Government is increasingly recognising the strategic importance of volunteering and has included it in the 2018-19 Programme for Government. It states that:

*'In the coming year we will publish a National Volunteering Outcomes Framework that will set out a coherent and compelling vision for volunteering and identify the key evidence and data to drive an increase in participation for all.'*¹

In this guide we will demonstrate that volunteering provides significant benefits and offers a sound investment for funders. We will also highlight the vital importance of adequate and realistic planning, budgeting and measurement to ensure that volunteering activity is successful.

Sarah Latto

Co-Chair, Scottish Volunteering Forum

¹ Delivering for Today, Investing for Tomorrow: The Government's Programme for Scotland 2018-19 (<https://beta.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/publication/2018/09/delivering-today-investing-tomorrow-governments-programme-scotland-2018-19/documents/00539972-pdf/00539972-pdf/govscot:document/>)



A Sound Investment

28% of the adult population in Scotland volunteer,² and it is estimated to contribute £2 billion to the Scottish economy.³ Volunteering has also been proven to have tangible benefits for individuals and communities, making it a sound return on investment.



Benefits for Individuals

Improves mental and physical health and wellbeing

Helps build relationships and social connections

Builds knowledge, skills and experience

Increases access to education or employment



Benefits for Communities

Supports preventative measures in targeting social issues

Improves child attainment and development

Promotes community or user-led approaches

Encourages civic and community participation

² 'Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2017 Scottish Household Survey', Scottish Government, 2018 (<https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00539880.pdf>)

³ 'Economic Value of Volunteering', Volunteer Scotland, 2017 (<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/for-organisations/research-and-evaluation/data-and-graphs/economic-value-of-volunteering/>)



Lynda is a volunteer with Shelter Scotland. She shares her experience of volunteering with convictions:

'As a result of extreme trauma, I acted totally out of character which led to me being convicted of theft. After this conviction I attended counselling and I started to attend college, learning the theory behind working in the care sector, although I still felt as though I was the most untrustworthy person on the planet.'

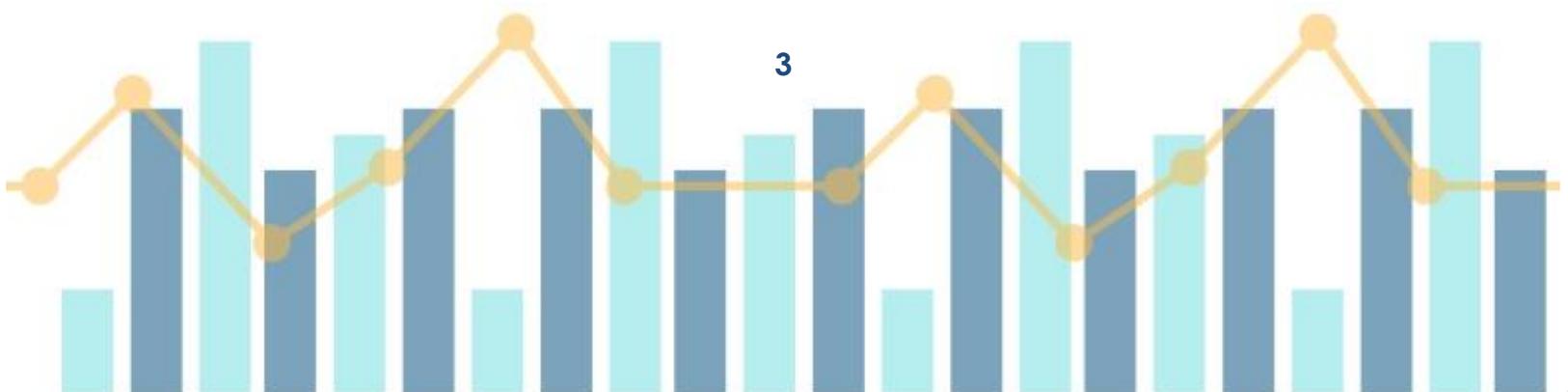
Shelter Scotland gave me the opportunity to volunteer with them, allowing me to build a professional relationship and begin to work with people that understood the issues I had been facing. They helped me to slowly start to build my confidence once more to put myself out there into the world of work.

I have now started my volunteering and loving it, I have the confidence to go into a new situation knowing that I have the full support from my volunteer coordinator. I also now have someone who is willing to provide me with a professional reference, a vital component to obtaining new employment. Volunteering has truly enabled me to take the next step to putting my new skills and qualifications into practice and without it I would most definitely not be attending university or have the mindset to even be looking at the prospect of working.'



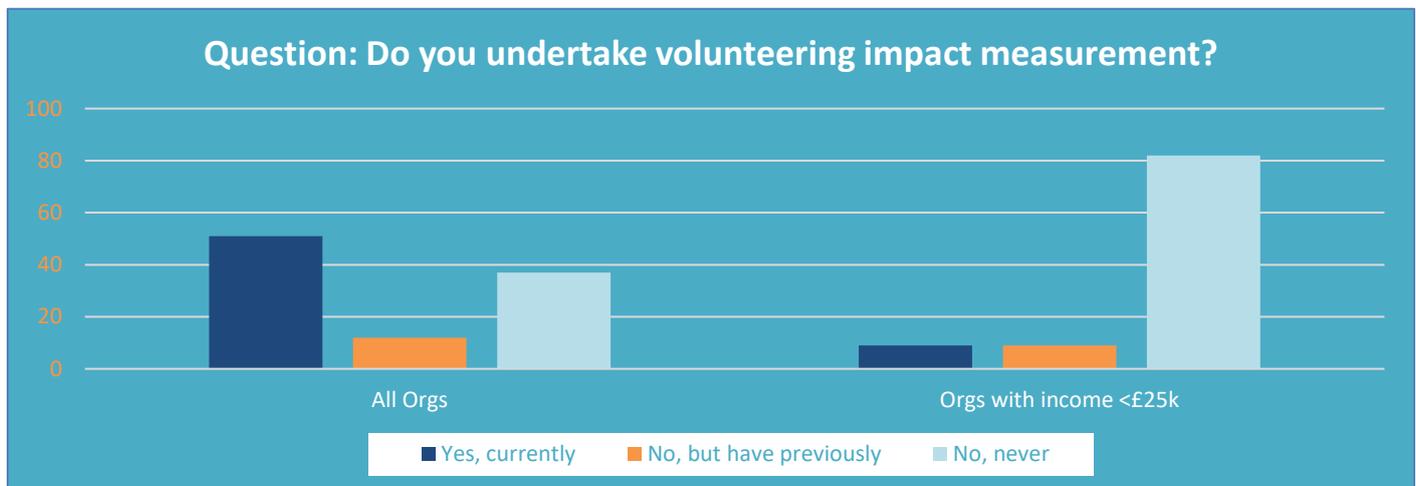
Lesley MacDonald, Convener of Scotland Funders' Forum and Head of Giving at the Robertson Trust, explains why funding volunteering is a sound investment:

'I have witnessed some of the incredible work of volunteers who support third sector organisations across Scotland. As Funders we all want to reach those individuals and communities where our resources can really make a difference. Volunteers play an essential role in helping our funded organisations achieve this through their drive and commitment. We also see the enormous benefits for the volunteers themselves, particularly those facing their own personal challenges but who gain so much from getting involved in their communities. It is important that Funders continue to recognise the value of volunteering as a key element of our overall support for the sector.'



An Undervalued Resource?

According to research completed by the Scottish Volunteering Forum in 2017⁴, 51% of volunteer involving organisations currently measure the impact of volunteering. However, this figure declines to only 9% for small organisations.



Of those organisations that measure volunteering impact, 97% measure its impact on volunteers and only 59% measure the impact on the organisation's beneficiaries.

When asked why they measured volunteer impact, only 41% of organisations said that they did so because it was a requirement of funders. Despite this, 53% share impact information with funders, suggesting that 12% of organisations share information about volunteering impact despite funders not requesting this information.

Fife Council have introduced mandatory questions related to volunteer activity in the reporting forms for every organisation they fund. Sharon Douglas, Community Investment Manager in Fife Council, said the following:

"Fife Council are keen to recognise the contribution that volunteers bring to community and voluntary groups across Fife. As a funder we want to capture the extent of this contribution as it undoubtedly adds significant value to the services being delivered. Encouraging and supporting volunteers is a key outcome for the Council and brings about many benefits for both the individuals and the organisations they volunteer with."

⁴ 'Understanding Volunteer Impact Measurement Practices across Scotland', 2017,

https://www.volunteerscotland.net/media/1335434/understanding_volunteering_impact_measurement_practices_across_scotland_final_report_.pdf



Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS) offers a full family support service for babies, children and young people with life-shortening conditions.

CHAS recently delivered a small pilot programme where 8 volunteers visited 8 families in their homes to provide practical and sibling support. CHAS worked with children, families and volunteers to co-design the home support programme.

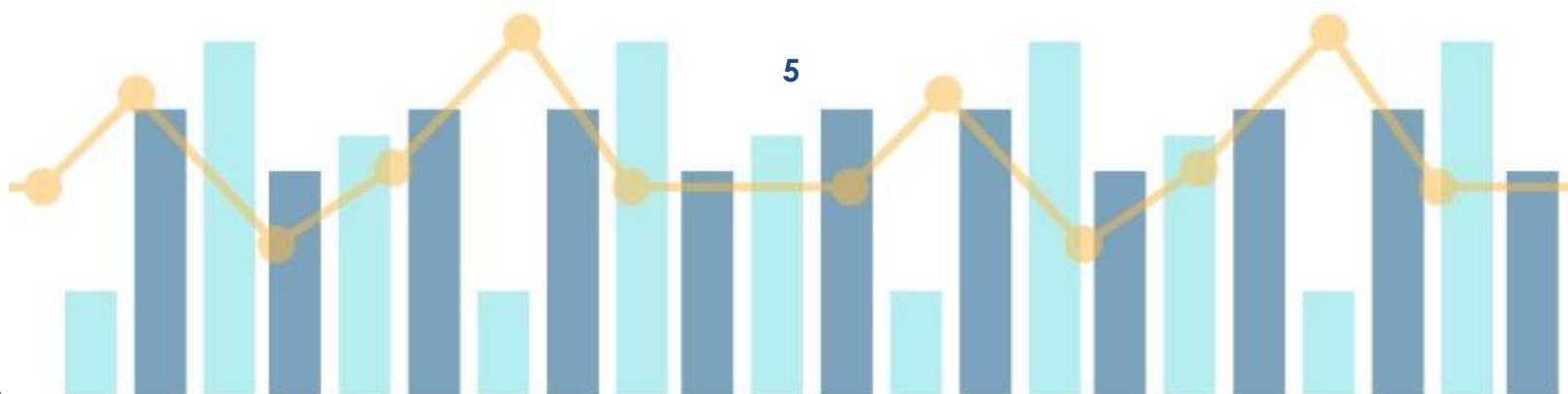
The GIRFEC (Getting it Right for Every Child) self-evaluation tool was used to evaluate the pilot. Wellbeing sits at the heart of the GIRFEC approach and reflects the need to tailor the support and help that children, young people and their parents are offered to support their wellbeing. To help ensure clarity around what wellbeing means, it is described in terms of eight indicators, commonly referred to by their initial letters – SHANARRI. The indicators are Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included.

Before they commenced their volunteering we interviewed the volunteers, parents and siblings, inviting them to share how they felt about the home support role in relation to the eight indicators. After three months we invited them to reflect on their role again, using the eight indicators as prompts.

The results of the evaluation were extremely positive. Intended outcomes were met and it was clear from the response of parents, siblings and volunteers that the programme was benefiting all parties. The results of the evaluation enabled the Volunteering Team at CHAS to influence the Senior Leadership Team and secure funding for the programme to be scaled up in the new financial year. It also inspired other volunteers to get involved, and enabled staff to see the impact that volunteers can have on a service which has helped to advance the profile of volunteering within the organisation.



Children's Hospices Across Scotland



Key Asks

Funders

Bidders

Be Realistic!

If it looks too good to be true, it probably is! Ensure that volunteer involvement is sustainable by incorporating it into plans, templates and budgets.

Build fields for volunteering into budget and project plan templates.

Provide guidance on volunteer involvement which demonstrate minimum standards.

Question any bids or tenders which don't adequately resource volunteering

Include detailed plans and budgets for involving volunteers in bids or tenders, even if you are not asked for this information.

Don't be tempted to include volunteering as an 'added value' or 'no cost' part of your bid. This is unsustainable in the long run.

Ask the Experts

Consult with people who understand volunteering to ensure that reporting templates, plans, budgets and outcomes are appropriate.

When creating or updating volunteering fields in bid or tender templates, speak with relevant agencies who have an expertise in volunteering

Signpost organisations to relevant bodies who can provide support on planning or budgeting for volunteer involvement.

Speak to volunteering 'experts' when including volunteering in bids or tenders.

This could be a volunteer manager or coordinator in your organisation, or a relevant external agency.

Measure Impact

Don't sell yourself short! Identify appropriate outcomes for measuring both the impact of volunteers and the impact on volunteers.

Identify appropriate outcomes and indicators which demonstrate the specific impact of and on volunteers.

Build outcomes relating to volunteering into reporting templates or documents.

Signpost organisations to appropriate sources of guidance and support on measuring volunteer impact.

If you are building volunteering into delivery model plans in bids and tenders, ensure that this is acknowledged when identifying or agreeing outcomes.

Gather and share volunteer impact data with funders, even if it's not asked, to demonstrate the unique impact and value of volunteering to your project.



The Voluntary Action Fund has managed funds specifically to support volunteering since 1982.

Over that time we have gained a comprehensive understanding of the impact of this kind of investment. Effective volunteering can be a powerful tool for delivering vital services to Scotland's communities. It can also bring substantial benefits to the volunteers themselves, the organisations they work within as well as the wider community.

Here are some of the benefits to organisations from the evaluation of the most recent Scottish Government Volunteering Support Fund.

Carnwadric WIN Project: *As a result of the funding we now have the process and paperwork in place to recruit, train and support volunteers. Having a named member of staff who supports volunteers has been a fantastic development for us. Now have a real knowledge of why people struggle to volunteer and how we can help.*

MS Therapy Centre Lothian: *Funding has allowed us to use external training providers to develop our staff members' understanding of how to manage volunteers. This training has focused on how to build positive staff and volunteer relationships, techniques and processes of volunteering recruitment, focusing on having policies and procedures in place, inductions, supervision and guidance. The training has allowed us to adapt a more volunteer-focused culture and how to provide a positive and supportive volunteering experience.*

In essence, providing funding to support volunteering enables an organisation to strengthen their ability to provide positive opportunities for volunteers and provide added value to their services and activities.



Useful Resources

'So What? Volunteering Impact Measurement: Top Tips to Get You Started'

<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/for-organisations/guidance/building-on-success/measuring-impact/>

Developed by another sub-group of the Scottish Volunteering Forum following research into volunteer impact measurement practices in Scotland, this document provides a great starting point for organisations looking to start measuring the impact of volunteers.

Volunteer Wiki

www.volunteerwiki.org.uk

A useful resource developed by Volunteer Edinburgh which contains a wealth of information populated by a range of volunteering experts.

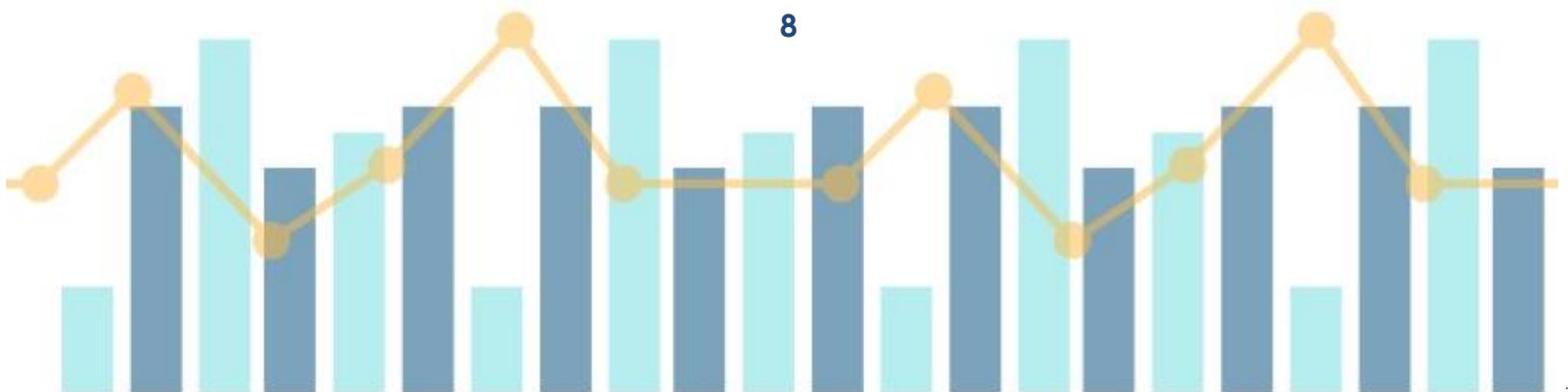
Volunteer Scotland

www.volunteerscotland.org.uk

Volunteer Scotland are the national centre for volunteering, and their website contains guidance on all aspects of volunteer management as well as a really interesting research section.

Key Contacts

Scottish Volunteering Forum	Co-Chairs: Sarah Latto – sarah_latto@shelter.org.uk or Paul Okroj – paul.okroj@chss.org.uk
Volunteer Scotland	www.volunteerscotland.net ; 01786 479 593
SCVO	www.scvo.org.uk ; 0131 474 8000
Befriending Networks	www.befriending.co.uk ; 0131 261 8799
Scottish Mentoring Network	www.scottishmentoringnetwork.co.uk ; 0141 559 5009
Evaluation Support Scotland	www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk ; 0131 243 2770
Local Third Sector Interfaces	For current contact details, go to https://beta.gov.scot/publications/third-sector-interfaces-contact-details/



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