

cultural volunteer ©

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WELCOME!

cultural volunteer (cv) is a free e-news and information service for arts management professionals. **cv** is published six times a year and comes to you from Lynn Blackadder, arts management consultant, www.lynnblackadder.com. You can choose to read **cv** in email or as a Word attachment. I hope you enjoy **cv**, but if you don't wish to receive future issues, please return this email typing 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.

IN THIS ISSUE ...

In this issue **cv** reviews findings from the Institute for Volunteering Research on **the attitudes towards volunteering of young people in England**, we learn about the **wholly volunteer-run Oundle Museum**, and hear about a new free e-book '**Turn Your Organisation Into A Volunteer Magnet**'.

WHY YOU SHOULD READ **cv** ...

cv is for arts management professionals who currently involve volunteers in their organisations, and for those who don't, but would like to find out more about volunteers.

cv aims to raise awareness of the resource cultural volunteers represent, and how to utilise it effectively.

cv actively campaigns for the recognition and progression of volunteers working in arts organisations.

cv can help you to better understand the nature of volunteering and how it relates to your organisation.

cv will regularly bring to your attention useful information, resources and commentary on volunteering in the cultural sector. Experts on volunteer management will feature, and we will explore topics raised by you in future issues.

FEATURE: Lynn Blackadder on managing fundraising volunteers

The next issue of **cv** will be dedicated to the subject of managing fundraising volunteers, incorporating some very useful new guidance published at the end of last year by the Institute of Fundraising. To get you thinking in advance, here are a few questions to ask yourself about how such volunteers operate in your organisation:

1. Which of the following statements applies to you?
 - a) Our volunteers raise money on behalf of our organisation.
 - b) Our volunteers raise money in aid of our organisation.

2. Do your volunteers use your charity number on their correspondence?
3. What is the scope of fundraising activity that your volunteers are involved in – for example: organising events, door-to-door collecting etc?
4. Do your volunteers negotiate sponsorship deals, and do they enter into commercial agreements with sponsors?
5. How do your volunteers manage the funds they raise for you? Do they have bank accounts in your name or their own? Do they produce annual accounts?
6. Do your volunteers charge VAT on tickets to fundraising events?

Tune in next time to see how your organisation shapes up against best practice and legislation!

RESEARCH FINDINGS: ‘Generation V: Young people speak out on volunteering’

At the end of last year, the Institute for Volunteering Research reported on key findings from research commissioned by the Home Office to inform the Russell Commission on the attitudes towards volunteering and extent of involvement in voluntary activities of young people in England. In summary, the key findings were:

Extent of volunteering

- 40% of 16-24 year olds had been involved in formal volunteering, and 73% had been involved in formal volunteering in the 12 months before interview (2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey).
- Young people are involved in a range of voluntary activities including: sports, hobbies, recreation and arts, and social clubs. They also volunteer in children’s activities (in and out of schools). The most common activity is helping to run an activity or event, followed by fundraising, and offering practical help or advice or information and counselling.

Perceptions

- Most young people have positive views of volunteering – seeing it as helping out, being a good citizen and a way to gain skills and experience. A minority (mainly hard to reach and marginalised groups) held that volunteering is boring and ‘not cool’, mainly as a result of limited knowledge of what volunteering involves. Those who do volunteer have a wider appreciation of its scope and potential.
- Many young people feel that the volunteering ‘brand’ needs an overhaul to enlarge its appeal, and reflect young people’s lifestyles.

Motivations and benefits

- Young people volunteer for a variety of reasons: personal feelings (satisfaction and desire to meet new people), personal needs (gaining a pastime, respect and interaction with others), altruism (helping others and doing good), experience, skills and career prospects, and personal inducements (certificates, qualifications and jobs). The importance of different motivations and benefits varies with age.

Barriers

- Young people not already involved in volunteering are unaware of the benefits. They feel access to more knowledge would help motivate them to volunteer (this is a double-edged sword, as the feeling is that there is, at first, a lack of information, but that when it's found, it's overwhelming and confusing).
- Other barriers are: lack of time, confidence, childcare and travel costs, negative peer pressure and the low status of volunteering among their age group. Time is one of the biggest barriers, with volunteering competing with studying and paid work. Young people also feel that they cannot afford to volunteer – a key issue for future mobilisation. Some young people are also put off by a lack of confidence and fear of rejection – especially amongst the disaffected and youngest age groups.

Mobilising volunteers

- Word of mouth is the most common method of mobilisation, and young people feel that this approach should be used more widely.
- Schools are also important, but volunteering should not solely be school-based or led, and it should not be compulsory.
- Promotional campaigns involving celebrities (national and local) could raise the status of volunteering. Volunteering messages should be about having fun, making friends, gaining skills etc.

Incentives and rewards

- There is no clear consensus among young people on this issue, though most agree that getting training awards and certificates, and working with friends would encourage more volunteering. Some are concerned that offering rewards would devalue the activity, reduce people's sense of purpose and satisfaction, and undermine the essence of volunteering. Recognition for their contributions – particularly by employers – is important.
- Opinion is divided on whether offering cash would act as an incentive to volunteer, but it is generally regarded as being highly problematic.
- Out of pocket expenses should definitely be reimbursed, but most feel that cash incentives would undermine the concept of volunteering, attract people for the wrong reasons, or simply be insufficient to attract them at all.

The organisation of volunteering

- Young people favour group and team activities, taster sessions and new types of voluntary activities.
- A high priority is placed on flexibility about how and when they volunteer, but some want a relatively structured programme.
- Young people want a say in planning and decision making, but many don't want to be overburdened with responsibility.

The bulletin concludes that there is a need to reclaim the concept of volunteering for young people, which should be peer-led, using young volunteers to show other young people the diversity of volunteering, its relevance to their lives, and the benefits it brings to them. This needs to be backed up by a re-examination of the ways in which organisations engage young people, providing meaningful and tailor-made opportunities that meet their needs.

To get a copy of the research bulletin, email instvolres@aol.com or call 0845 305 6979. The full report is available from the same source and costs £8.50. There is also a companion report by Katharine Gaskin 'Young People, Volunteering and Civic Service: A review of the literature', also for £8.50.

FREE STUFF: 'Turn Your Organisation Into A Volunteer Magnet' by Andy Fryar, Rob Jackson and Fraser Dyer

Everyone involved in managing volunteers, or interested in doing so, should read this free electronic book. It's a wee gem.

The book's highly readable 13 articles were written by a mix of what the editors call 'silent experts' – people with a lot to say about their experiences but no outlet – as well as better known commentators on the subject. All those writing operate at the coal face in volunteer management. The book is intended as a 'neat little free resource that was fresh, accessible and could be dipped into by readers when in need of inspiration (rather than be read from cover to cover).' I was particularly interested in the editors' thinking behind the 'Volunteer Magnet' aspect of the title, and the way the theme runs through the articles: 'Magnets for young volunteers', 'If it looks like a magnet', 'Reverse polarity and the volunteer magnet', as well as other alluring titles such as 'The best way is through the stomach'!

To download a PDF copy of the book log on to the Energize web site's free electronic books page at <http://www.energizeinc.com/art/elecbooks.html>.

NEWS FROM A CV SUBSCRIBER: Ioan Thomas on Oundle Museum – a small museum run by volunteers

About Oundle

Oundle is a small market town in North Northamptonshire with a population of about 5,000. The centre of the town has a large number of fine stone-built houses near the church and has changed very little since Georgian times. About 3,000 children attend school there. It is a town which attracts visitors and which deserves to have a museum.

Getting started

The Museum, which has just celebrated its tenth anniversary, has its origin in the Historical Society which was founded 21 years ago. Several small exhibitions using material lent by local people and organised by the society were held, and they showed that there would be considerable support for a museum. Discussions with the Town Council, supported by advice from the East Midlands Museums Service, led to a large upstairs room in the former Drill Hall being made available at a peppercorn rent. Eight Trustees were appointed, one from each of four local organisations (the Historical Society, the Mid-Nene Archaeological Group, the Oundle Buildings Group and the Oundle group of the Wildlife Trust), and four from the Town Council. The Chairman for the year is the Mayor, but the Vice-Chair comes from the local groups and provides continuity from year to year; all eight are volunteers. The Trustees meet four times a year and are responsible for all the formal business of the Museum and its relationship with the Charity Commissioners and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. In the year 2000, thanks to a large Heritage Lottery Fund grant which included funds designated for the Museum, the Town Council was able to move into the old Courthouse and make several rooms, including two cells, available to be rented by the Museum. Finding finance to cover the increased cost of rent and insurance has become a considerable challenge for the Trustees.

Sharing the responsibility

A Management Committee of about 12 volunteers who meet once a month to plan the work of the Museum is at the heart of the organisation, and one of the joys has been to find how all sorts of different talents are brought together to make an exhibition which visitors appreciate. We need people who are meticulous in recording acquisitions and loans, and those who know where material for a particular exhibition might be found; others with skill in making models, or those who can convert the corner of a room into a Roman Kitchen; also others who enjoy researching a topic perhaps at the County Record Office. One member maintains a card index of people who have lived in Oundle, and is able to answer many of the family history enquiries that are made; another makes sure that two volunteer stewards are on duty every Saturday and Sunday afternoon during the nine months when the Museum is open, and someone else is responsible for publicity. Two of the members offered their home phone number to be registered as the Museum phone number so enquirers are likely to get a quick reply. The committee choose a special theme for each year, so there is change each year as well as the more permanent exhibition about the history of the town.

A third committee is responsible for the Friends of Oundle Museum. This body was set up to raise funds to enable purchases to be made. Friends donate, usually by Banker's Order and often with Gift Aid, and about £1,000 is being received each year. It is hoped to increase this amount, partly by encouraging more people to become Friends and partly by holding more special events such as the very successful Quiz Night. The different committees exchange their Minutes, so everyone is kept informed.

The next generation

Almost all the volunteers are retired and most are also committed to other voluntary activity. I think that the only problem is that a group of people who have become close friends can grow old together and become difficult to join, so we are taking special care to get younger people to be involved on the committees and to have real responsibility. We are aware of the need to be able to retire gracefully from volunteer work with the Museum committees and we now have a President, though I think that Honorary Consultant may become an appropriate appointment as more of us approach our eighties.

Contact Ioan Thomas at oundle@globalnet.co.uk.

CV SUBSCRIBERS – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Festival of London Youth Arts (FLYA)

2002 saw the first Festival of Youth Arts in London which offered more than 70 events and workshops across the city. FLYA is now planning its second festival which will run later this year, and is providing exciting volunteering opportunities for motivated young volunteers – aged 16-24 years – to act as Youth Arts Ambassadors and get involved in running various aspects of this major arts event. The role will include:

- Attending a training day
- Promoting local events in Schools and Colleges
- Welcoming people to events
- Stewarding at the large Trafalgar Square Launch
- Spreading the word about FLYA 05 through friends, family, school, youth clubs etc
- Completing a designated tour of schools (giving presentations)
- Communicating with FLYA about progress

FLYA will be holding an open workshop training day (scheduled for 12 February) with voluntary work beginning in March. The training will provide volunteers with the skills to participate in different aspects of FLYA and lead young people to gain hands on experience in a local and large scale Arts event. Volunteers will have access to a network of creative partners, centres and arts activities within their local community. Beyond FLYA, organisers will provide links to further learning and training opportunities, and where possible create pathways into the creative industries.

Benefits will include free tickets to events at lead centres, travelling expenses, certificate, and surprise goody bag. Please forward the details of interested volunteers including full name, address and contact numbers to flya1@youthartslondon.co.uk or telephone 0207 482 3012 by **9 February 2005**.

NEXT ISSUE

In April **cv** will be dedicated to exploring the issues around **managing fundraising volunteers**.

FEEDBACK

cv is keen to respond to your interests and needs. If you would like to forward your news and views, comment on content, or suggest a topic for discussion, please email lynn@lynnblackadder.com.

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