

Employer Supported Volunteering and the VCS

Wednesday 22nd June 2016 Kirkley Hall.

Workshops Feedback

What is the value to VCS organisations of collaborating with businesses?

- Longer term support to help groups survive and be sustainable.
- Good relations with local community e.g. Seafield caravan park, Seahouses – staff encouraged to be school governors.
- Can help provide support in identified gaps of expertise e.g business planning
- An outside observer – can play devil's advocate to help identify gaps.
- An analysis/audit of current activities and future opportunities.
- Support that understands the social impact/benefit not just the profit motive.
- Why not utilise the expertise across the VCSE sector first, what can we all do well that can be shared?
- Joint PR and marketing between sectors.
- 'New blood' and ways of working on a trustee board, can help develop the charity.
- Charities need to 'reassure' potential new volunteers and trustees on abilities and responsibilities.
- Can challenge 'the easy option'/cosiness with some boards.
- Can refresh/review/ update policies, practices, procedures of a charity.
- Need to understand the sector – charities, CIC's, social enterprise.
- Clarity of language and terminology.
- Bespoke needs and support.
- Succession planning and development.

What are the challenges to VCS working with businesses to implement ESV?

- Capacity issues – giving meaningful time, induction.
- Managing and supervising volunteers.
- Regularity of volunteers.
- Providing clear role description.
- Having the right processes and procedures in place before taking on volunteers – good planning required and 'business-like'. Time is a challenge
- Giving meaningful support/ recognition to volunteers, investing time and resources.

- Building relationships with businesses – ‘getting in the door’. Can be a slow process, experiences of this with large corporate organisations.
- Need to convince the employer of the benefits of supporting the sector.
- Haven’t got the evidence/ competitiveness to get others on board.
- Ideas to help - resource library, support one another, business planning.

What do VCS organisations need to have in place to be volunteer ready to partner with businesses?

- Clear role description and task specific.
- Clear expectations of both organisations, VCS and the company – skills exchange.
- Ensuring health and safety is in place and other appropriate policies.
- Identifying gaps within organisations.
- Marketing your organisation.
- Board and management buy-in.

How can the VCS effectively market the role of trustees to businesses?

- SME’s don’t have confidence to promote themselves
- SME’s don’t always talk to each other e.g. wedding/ photographer etc
- Give businesses better idea of what trusteeship means.
- Charities need better idea of what they needs – skills specific
- Create market place – people with skills/trustee vacancies e.g. finance, law
- Shared vision
- Skills do not need to be at a senior level e.g. IT
- VCS organisations need to be more sophisticated, need trustees with better knowledge and understanding e.g. health and safety.
- Trusteeship looks good on CV – can develop a different skill set. Added value for the business.
- Can take skills back to business
- Young people bring new perspective- more questioning, can shake things up.
- Toolkit – what does a trustee do? Regularly updated. Questionnaire/quiz.
- Case studies to ‘sell’ idea of trusteeship.
- Need to progress ideas beyond just the talking.
- Target minority communities.