



volunteer centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Fhine Ghall

FINGAL

How we work with volunteer involving organisations

A guide to the supports we provide to volunteer involving organisations in Fingal, County Dublin



Fingal Volunteer Centre is an independent and free matching service to encourage more people to become involved in volunteering across the county. Our role is to provide information and advice to people interested in volunteering and to organisations looking for volunteers. In doing so we work with Voluntary and Community Organisations to gather information about their volunteering needs, and in the process offer support and advice on good practice in volunteer management.

Fingal Volunteer Centre is part of a network of 22 Volunteer Centres and a member of Volunteer Ireland. Further information and downloadable resources can be found on our web site: www.volunteerfingal.ie

Who Will We Work With?

Fingal Volunteer Centre will work with any not-for-profit organisation – this may include charities, community groups, co-operatives and statutory organisations such as health centres, schools, hospitals, etc. We may ask to see your constitution or set of rules to clarify this. We will not seek volunteers for individuals or for for-profit organisations.

Fingal Volunteer Centre serves the needs of organisations operating within the boundaries of Fingal County Council.

What Services Do We Provide?

Promotion of your Volunteering Opportunities to our Database of Volunteers:

Fingal Volunteer Centre has a database of people throughout Fingal who want to get involved in volunteering. Organisations can be registered on this database so that their volunteering opportunities are visible and can be promoted to these volunteers. To do so, the Organisation must first register itself and provide

details such as: Contact Details, Staff and Volunteer Numbers, presence of relevant policies, Charity or Company Number (where available) etc. If not provided, staff from the centre may seek it at a later stage.

Organisations can register as many opportunities as they like. Each opportunity must have a name, and as many of the questions must be answered as possible. The more information provided the better chance there is of getting volunteers interested.

We can also share your opportunities with other Volunteer Centres around the country. Locally, there are volunteer centres in Dublin, Meath and Louth for example – you may wish to have your opportunities advertised there, so please let us know and we are happy to circulate them.

We often advertise opportunities on the front of our website, which can attract additional attention. Please let us know if you would like us to do that and provide us with an article for display. Such articles will only be displayed for a time-limited period. We also send out regular updates to our volunteers of the new and re-advertised vacancies.



Information & Support on recruiting and managing volunteers:

Fingal Volunteer Centre can provide advice and guidance, or access to information, on a range of issues related to managing volunteers. This might relate to the recruitment of volunteers, how to motivate volunteers, dealing with difficult situations, etc. This support is available on an ad-hoc basis. Feel free to pick up the phone and talk to us, or arrange a meeting with us.

There is also a small library of books available for you to borrow – just drop us an email or call us and we'll arrange to get the book(s) out to you. The list of books is enclosed with this pack. Resources are also available online, at our website www.volunteerfingal.ie. There you will also find links to other web sites that might provide you with further information.

Volunteer Management Training

Fingal Volunteer Centre run a four module Volunteer Management Training Programme. Each module takes about 4 hours and is generally run once a week over four weeks. Please see the training pages on our web site for further information on the content of these modules. Notification of each volunteer management training will be sent out to all our contacts by email.

Garda Vetting

Fingal Volunteer Centre provides a Garda Vetting service to voluntary organisations that do not have access to their own Authorised Signatory. An Authorised Signatory is someone who has been trained by An Garda Síochána in the correct administration of Garda Vetting. Because not all small organisations are able to access this Garda training, we may act as an Authorised Signatory. To avail of this service, your organisation, or members of it, must be willing to meet with us and ensure that certain procedures are in place, before Garda Vetting can begin. Please ask us if you would like more information on this.

How We Provide Our Service

Face – to - Face

Fingal Volunteer Centre has an office in Blanchardstown with outreach offices in Balbriggan and Swords and we are available to meet with you at any of these offices. Alternatively we can come to your office, or book a community space local to you. If you want to talk to us about how we might be able to support your organisation please book a meeting with us. From time to time we organise Volunteer Management training or community meetings that might be of interest to you.

Electronically

Because our database is electronic and held online, we do a lot of our communication via our website and email. We try to keep our website updated with useful information and we circulate other information via email. We can also answer queries or seek information for you via email. Each organisation registered with us has one or more contacts registered with the organisation, please ensure that everyone who wants to receive emails from us is registered as a contact. If you do not wish to receive further communication from us via email please let us know.

Telephone

Fingal Volunteer Centre staff are always available on the phone to answer questions – please feel free to give us a call. If we can't help, we will try and find someone who can.

Paper

There are guides, info sheets, good practice templates, books, etc available at our Blanchardstown office. If you want to come and have a look at what we have please let us know and we can arrange it. While most people use email these days, if you wish to be contacted in another way please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate.

What Do We Expect From You?

That You Keep Volunteers Updated

Many of the people applying to be volunteers may not have done this before and therefore may not know what to expect. They may not realize how long the process is going to take, you might just be extremely busy, they may think you have forgotten about them, and some may think they were not good enough for the role – which can have repercussions for other choices they make. Therefore it's important that volunteers are kept updated on how their application is proceeding – even if its just a quick email to say “no change”.

Of course, volunteers may not get back to you, or messages might get lost, or sometimes there's confusion about who's to get back to who, in which case please let us know.

That You Keep Us Updated

If a volunteer has been placed with you, if they were completely inappropriate, or if you never heard from them again, please let us know.



This information helps us provide a better service by better understanding your service. We can also follow up with the volunteer to get some feedback, or if you've lost the volunteers contact details, which is very easily done, we can get them for you again! We will also seek feedback on our service once a year, so please help us out if you have a few minutes to spare and complete the questionnaire we circulate at that time.

If you have any photos, or testimonials from volunteers we would love to see them. We can add them to our website and / or Annual Report – these kinds of documents always help generate more interest in your organisation. If there are any changes to staffing, please let us know so that we can update our contacts database.

That You Abide By Our Equal Opportunities Policy

We recognise that in our society certain individuals and groups of people are unfairly discriminated against, both directly and indirectly. They are often denied the same treatment or opportunity on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, caring responsibilities, mental or physical health/disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic/national origin (including membership of the travelling community), political or religious beliefs, economic status, criminal record, trade union activity, or a combination of any of these. We strive to eliminate all such forms of discrimination and to create a climate in which equal opportunities are promoted as a means of developing the full potential of everyone who is involved with our organisation. We do this by fulfilling our legal obligations and by taking positive action, which goes beyond the requirements of the law but by avoiding stereotyping and tokenism.

We realise that not every organisation has an equal opportunities policy. However, we do want to make sure that any volunteers that we refer to, or place with organisations do not suffer undue discrimination. This does not mean that you must accept anyone who contacts you; there might be very good reasons, for example, why you are looking for someone of a particular sex. It simply means that you do not turn anyone away, only because of the colour of their skin or only because they use a wheelchair, for example.

Accessing the Service

To access the services of Fingal Volunteer Centre please register with us online, by phone or through a face-to-face meeting. Once your organisation is registered, you will receive an automatic response email informing you of your unique VCI code.

This code allows you to register new volunteering opportunities directly onto our database. Once checked by us, those vacancies will go 'live'. Once registered you will receive, by email or post, a welcome pack of documents related to us. You may also receive a call from us to clarify information related to your registration.

Refusal of Service

Under certain circumstances FVC may refuse to accept a registration, or refuse to place volunteers with the organisation. This may be due to continued breaches of our Equal Opportunities policy, or knowledge that the organisation engages in unlawful behaviour, for example. For a full explanation of why and how this might occur please see our policy: Criteria for non-Registration or non-placement of volunteers and non-registration of, or non-placement of volunteers with organisations which can be downloaded from our web site.

Recording of Information

In addition to the information you provide on registration, our database allows us to record notes on the contact we have with you. This will generally include the date of the conversation, who it was with, and any important information discussed. We will also record if you have completed any of our volunteer management training modules, or have requested to do them. You are free to request a copy of any information we hold on you or your organisation. Please ask us or request to see our data protection policy and procedure for further information.

Acceptance Of These Conditions

Having sent you this document, we will assume that you agree to abide by its conditions, unless we hear otherwise from you. If you fail to meet the conditions of this document we will explain to you where we feel the conditions are not being met. Support and training can be made available at this stage to assist the organisation to better meet these requirements. If you continue to fail to meet the conditions Fingal Volunteer Centre reserves the right to discontinue our service to you.

Appealing This Decision

Should you disagree with the Manager's decision to suspend our service to you, please write to the Chairperson. Your appeal will be considered by the Board, or a sub-committee of the Board of Fingal Volunteer Centre.

Compliments and Complaints

Fingal Volunteer Centre welcomes all feedback, both positive and negative as it allows us to deliver a better service to the community.