



Auditing Skills
People Investment
Realising Enterprise

Capacity building for Volunteer Centres to meet the challenge of the Volunteering Strategy for Scotland



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE



PROJECT PART-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

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The ASPIRE Project

The ASPIRE Project has been developed to build the capacity of the Volunteer Centre Network in Scotland. Volunteer Centres have a key delivery role in achieving the outcomes of the Scottish Executive Volunteering Strategy that seeks to develop a robust culture of volunteering in Scotland.

The Network of VCs is tasked with responding strategically and operationally to the specific strands within the Strategy document. At the same time there is a need to seize the social economy opportunities arising from gaining an understanding of the specific interventions that volunteering can offer to improving the quality of life for people and communities throughout Scotland.

The ASPIRE Project is the result of a number of developments and discussions involving the VC Scotland Committee, Volunteer Development Scotland and the Network of VCs generally. With its experience of European funding regimes and long-established training delivery expertise, the Volunteer Centre North Lanarkshire applied for funding support to lead the project delivery. As part of a two phase project, ASPIRE Phase 1 has been backed by the Voluntary Issues Unit of the Scottish Executive and ESF Objective 3.

The main beneficiaries of ASPIRE are Volunteer Centre managers, the staff and volunteers of VCs, and the boards and committees involved in VC governance. As a result of the organisational and individual development that ASPIRE provides for, the indirect beneficiaries include VC partners and stakeholders, volunteer involving organisations, and ultimately—and most importantly—volunteers themselves.

ASPIRE Phase 1 focuses on discovering the organisational and developmental needs of VCs. This includes mapping skills, competencies and structures within VCs, developing VCs as learning organisations, pursuing three distinct



ASPIRE Higher

research projects, and establishing the entrepreneurial case. The focus of Phase 2 is on delivery, to meet the needs that are discovered from the earlier activity.

Participating VCs commit to sustaining their involvement in ASPIRE, recording the time designated for engaging in ASPIRE activity, and following through on negotiated tasks according to established timescales.

ASPIRE is designed as an innovative, forward thinking project that will prepare VCs for a more sustainable and outcome-focused programme of work that brings the VCs unique remit to the fore as a major contribution to quality of life in Scotland.

Aspirations & Outcomes

The Volunteering Strategy lists 11 Key Outcomes that are anticipated to have a major positive impact on the lives of the people of Scotland. Volunteer Centres have accepted the challenge of delivering on these outcomes, and the ASPIRE Project is designed to enhance the capacity and skills of VC personnel to this end.

Specific Project Outcomes have been adopted for ASPIRE that are especially aspirational and listed opposite.

ASPIRE Outcomes:

- Volunteer Centres have an increased capacity to deliver high quality services to the communities of Scotland throughout the Network.
- Volunteer Centres are learning organisations that invest in their staff and volunteers to achieve common aims and objectives.
- Volunteer Centres have seized the social enterprise opportunities to grow the Scottish Executive core funding.

The ASPIRE Project has been developed by the Volunteer Centre North Lanarkshire which is the operating name for North Lanarkshire Volunteering Development Agency (NLVDA).

NLVDA is a registered Scottish charity (no. SC011175) and a company limited by guarantee (no. 190682).

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