



6.0 Employing and Managing People

Working in the Voluntary Sector

Overview

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If you are new to the Voluntary Sector or you're thinking of applying for a job in the sector, then this information sheet might be useful.

Introduction

The voluntary Sector, (**community and voluntary sector or not-for-profit sector**) is diverse and covers everything from local community groups to social enterprises and local, national and international charities.

The sector is independent from local and national government, and distinct from the private sector, as it does not make profit to redistribute to shareholders.



Image: Woman working at a computer

People can work in the Voluntary Sector as either paid staff or volunteers and trustees. Some organisations are run entirely by volunteers whilst others have a mix of paid staff and volunteers.

There are the several different forms of organisations within the voluntary Sector:

- Charities
- Community groups
- Social enterprises
- Co-operatives
- Community Interest Companies (CICs)
- Credit Unions

There are approximately 30,000 voluntary and community organisations in Wales. The sector in Wales employs at least 30,000 people. This represents 2.4% of the number of people employed in Wales and therefore it is a significant player in the Welsh economy and Welsh civic society.

There is a continuing need for new people, talent and skills to come into the sector to support organisations that are developing and growing. The sector is ever adapting to new service needs and these are met by new projects and newly established groups.

Voluntary Sector organisations achieve their aims through a wide range of activities, such as providing services and direct support and advice to individuals and communities. There are organisations whose primary aim is to achieve long-term or systematic change to policy and practice or positively impact on communities or the environment. Organisations may work locally, regionally, across Wales, across the UK or at a European or Global level.

Charities

Charities are set up to address specific issues. Organisations can only be charities if they work in the public interest and not just to further the interests of certain individuals.

Charities receive their funds from many sources (see below). Money raised helps to pay for the delivery of services or projects for beneficiaries and to pay for the operation and running of the charity.

There are restrictions on the kind of activity charities can get involved with and the way they are run. **For example, charities cannot promote party political views.** Charities are governed by voluntary trustees; these volunteers might be appointed or elected, depending on the constitution or rules of the organisation. You can gain lots of experience in the sector by becoming a trustee.

The Board of trustees (or **management committee**) governs the organisation and makes decisions for the benefit of the people and communities they support. In small charities with few or no staff, the trustees often take on hands-on roles. For organisations with paid staff, the Board delegate the day-to-day running of the organisation to the staff and in some cases to a senior worker or manager.

Community Groups

Generally, **community groups** exist to provide services for local people and are not-for-profit. Often community groups are entirely volunteer run. Examples of community groups include:

- Sports clubs
- Community and village halls
- Local arts groups
- Support groups **e.g. parent and carer groups**

Social Enterprises

Social enterprises are businesses that aim to change the world for the better. Like traditional businesses, they aim to make a profit but it's what they do with their profits that sets them apart – they reinvest or donate profits to create positive **social change**. Social enterprises tend to focus on having a positive impact in the community or on the environment.

Working in the Voluntary Sector

What Are Our Principles?

In many ways working in the Voluntary Sector is like working in many other types of organisations but there are some important differences in the sector.

Raising Funds

As we know, Voluntary Sector organisations raise money to do work but do not make profits to distribute to shareholders. Money is raised in several ways:

- Donations from the public
- Membership fees *i.e. The National Trust*
- Grants from public funds *e.g. from local authorities*
- Grants from trusts *e.g. Lloyds Bank Foundation*
- Fundraising through events *e.g. charity ball, auctions*
- Payment for contracts for projects, goods and services
- Selling goods and services
- Legacies – money left in Wills

How We Respond to Customers

Our customers may be called clients, service users, beneficiaries or members and are the people who benefit from what the organisation does. However, they may not be the person who pays for the service or pays for it in full. *For example, homeless people may be referred to a homelessness charity, but they are not expected to pay for the support they receive.*

The money to pay for these services is likely to come from public donations, grants or contracts for projects or services from agencies such as the local authority or Welsh Government.

Commit to Equality and Diversity

The Voluntary Sector is committed to equality and diversity. This influences our policies on recruitment, promotion, pay and terms and conditions. Our commitment to diversity means that we value all people and their contributions, we are non-judgemental and avoid stereotyping. At interview we often discuss and explore candidate's views and ideas around equality and diversity.

Many Voluntary Sector organisations have come about to challenge perceptions and behaviours that discriminate against groups in society. Their work tries to eliminate discrimination and improve inclusion. If equality, diversity and inclusion are important to you, then there are many organisations and groups in the sector that would benefit from your involvement.

Involving Volunteers

Volunteers give their time freely without expecting financial reward. They often volunteer for a cause they believe passionately in. Many voluntary sector groups rely heavily on volunteers.

Some organisations develop membership schemes for their volunteers that give them voting rights at annual general meetings and seek their opinions on future projects and services. This ensures that volunteers have a greater sense of belonging and a real say in how the organisation is run.

How We Are Managed

Voluntary committees run voluntary Sector organisations; in charities these are called Boards of Trustees or Management Committees. They have legal obligations and responsibilities. How often the Board meets will depend on their role and obligations, and the size and nature of the organisation.

Values-led

Voluntary Sector organisations aim to fulfil their mission and work towards improving lives in some specific way, rather than making a profit. This often means they prioritise differently than a business would do. Many organisations in the sector are led by their values. Their values describe the principles by which they operate e.g. **inclusive, client-led, empowering**

Creativity

Many voluntary Sector organisations do not have large budgets. People who donate to charities rightly expect their money to be spent carefully and for the purpose of their donation. Therefore, organisations often need to be creative and flexible to do more with less. Often, organisations are meeting complex needs and therefore excellent problem-solving and innovation are important characteristics of many.

Pace

Things can often move more quickly in voluntary organisations. They might be expected to make decisions quickly and to be flexible and adaptable in response to feedback and evaluation from clients.

Partnership Working

Working in partnership, with emphasis on collaboration is a key aspect of the voluntary Sector. Charitable organisations may work together in partnership and often work in partnership with other bodies e.g. local authorities, NHS, Police.

Independence

Voluntary Sector organisations are independent of government. As we know, they are governed by an independent Board who decide on strategy, priorities and structure.

Thinking of Applying For a Job?

Before Applying - Get to Know the Sector and the Organisation

Check out the charity's website or give them a call. The local county voluntary council can tell you about the charities in their county – have a look at their websites.



External Link

For an overview of the sector in Wales check out WCVA's website:
[WCVA Website](#)

You could volunteer for a charity to get to know it better or develop experience in a field of activity. Before filling in an application form or updating your CV, you should know about the organisation's goals and areas of work. It's worth appreciating how the role you're applying for fits in with the rest of the organisation.

Jargon

There are a wide range of job descriptions and job titles within the voluntary Sector. The sector has developed its own jargon and ways of working and it is useful to think about how your skills might match an organisation's needs. Do your research by looking at relevant websites or talking to people who already work or volunteer in the sector.

Jobs

So, what sorts of jobs are in the voluntary Sector?

Well, anything goes from accountants, advocates, carers, community development workers, drivers, event-organisers, fundraisers, managers, musicians, outdoor instructors, tutors, play workers, researchers and everything in between.

Skills

There will be specific skills associated with each job role and job description, however there are general skills and attributes that are in demand in the sector.

- Great people skills
- Positive attitude to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Effective communication skills
- Being adaptable and able to learn quickly
- Creativity and problem solving
- Being a good team player
- A focus on enabling beneficiaries to achieve rather than doing it for them
- Ability to work under pressure, manage your time well and manage multiple priorities
- Good IT and digital skills
- A can-do attitude
- Willingness to keep learning

The advert will summarise the knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications needed for the job. The person specification will give more detail.

Communicate What You Have to Offer

What are your skills, areas of knowledge, experience and qualifications? Remember many skills are transferable – so think about how you've developed at school, college, through volunteering, in other jobs, supporting your family and community.

Have a good understanding of the organisation's values so you can map them to your CV and write about them in your application. When you complete your application make sure you demonstrate you have the skills that are requested, by giving examples.

Think about the skills you might need to do a particular job or type of work. Have you got them? If not, how are you going to develop them? If you want to work in the sector but don't have much experience now, then consider volunteering as one way of developing your skills, knowledge and confidence. Volunteering is a great way to learn and to enhance your CV.

Once you have identified your transferable skills make sure your CV is focused to the voluntary Sector and include any sector experience. Remember it doesn't have to be paid experience!

Practical Tips for Finding the Right Job

Get involved in voluntary work and become a member of a charity you are particularly interested in. Volunteering can provide you with new skills and a better understanding of the ways in which the charity operates. Think very carefully about the type of organisation you will be joining and whether you are suited to it.

Make sure you support the aims and objectives of the charity you plan to work for. Connect with as many people as you can in the voluntary Sector, through volunteering, networking, social media, LinkedIn.

Get in Touch - the Direct Approach

You could select a few of charities or community organisations and write to or email them directly. Remember to include a covering letter with your CV - outline clearly what your skills are and the type of work you can do for them. Its better if you can find out the name of the specific person you need to email or write to.

Remember to update your LinkedIn profile and include a link to it in your email.

Where to Look for Jobs

There are many relevant websites out there, but the following often advertise jobs from the Sector.

Recruit3

Recruit3

www.recruit3.org.uk

Jobs

Third Sector Jobs

www.jobs.thirdsector.co.uk

Charity Jobs

Charity Job

www.charityjob.co.uk

Jobs

The Guardian

www.jobs.theguardian.com/

Jobs Go Public

Source

www.jobsgopublic.com

Indeed - Third Sector Jobs

Indeed

www.indeed.co.uk/Third-Sector-jobs

Third Sector Jobs

Jobsite

www.jobsite.co.uk/jobs/third-sector

Linkedin Jobs

Linkedin

<https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/>



Cefnogi Trydydd
Sector **Cymru**

Third Sector
Support **Wales**

Third Sector Support Wales is a network of support organisations for the whole of the third sector in Wales.

It consists of the 19 local and regional support bodies across Wales, the County Voluntary Councils (CVCs) and the national support body, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA).

For further information contact
<https://thirdsectorsupport.wales/contact/>

Disclaimer

The information provided in this sheet is intended for guidance only. It is not a substitute for professional advice and we cannot accept any responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.