

How EVS benefits organisations

EVS projects supported under Erasmus+ have enabled Cardiff-based UNA Exchange to provide international experience to young people with fewer opportunities.

Their 'Step by Step' project supports mainly short-term EVS volunteering in other countries, with a focus on learning about different cultures and promoting active citizenship.

Sheila Smith, 'Step by Step' manager, at UNA Exchange says:

“We believe international volunteering is a powerful force for change in the world. It is an amazing way for people to learn new skills and gain new perspectives.”



UNA Exchange volunteers

Contact us

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Erasmus+



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Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport. The Erasmus+ UK National Agency is a partnership between the British Council and Ecorys UK.



EUROPEAN
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE **20**
YEARS!

Celebrating
20 years of
youth volunteering

Apply in 2016

What is European Voluntary Service?

In 2016, European Voluntary Service (EVS) is celebrating its 20th anniversary of enabling young people to volunteer abroad.

Now part of the Erasmus+ programme, with funding through Key Action 1 Youth Mobility, EVS gives anyone aged 17-30 the opportunity to develop their experience and skills through international volunteering placements, both within and beyond the European Union.

Volunteers apply to an organisation with the aim of being involved in its daily work in the form of community-level projects. These typically cover education, the environment, and health and social care. Placements can last from two weeks up to 12 months.



Anna Sowa (right) was an EVS participant and now runs projects

How does it work?

Organisations in the UK can get involved in EVS either by running their own project to send young people abroad or by hosting international volunteers.

An EVS project can include between one and 30 volunteers participating either individually or as a group.

All organisations taking part in an EVS project, whether for co-ordinating, hosting or sending volunteers, must have the relevant accreditation in place beforehand for their respective roles. Full details are on the Erasmus+ website on the EVS accreditation page.

When an organisation has EVS accreditation, parts of their application will be published on the volunteering database of the European Youth Portal. This is an effective way to attract potential volunteers.

Apply for funding in 2016

There is still time in 2016 for UK organisations to apply for funding for EVS projects. The deadline is 11am (UK time) on 4 October.

The amount of funding is calculated on a 'per participant basis' and so varies according to project, but covers things like travel and food, project management, and language support, as well as specific needs.

EVS accreditation has to be in place before the application deadline, as proof of compliance with quality standards, but it does not automatically lead to a project grant.

If you do not currently have EVS accreditation or have not applied for it by 19 August, you will not be able to apply for EVS funding for the final deadline of 2016.

How EVS benefits young people

The word that EVS volunteers most often use to describe their experience is 'life-changing'. Experiencing a different culture, environment and language, while also bringing benefit to other people in their own communities, are just some of the benefits of volunteering abroad. EVS is great preparation for future jobs as well as having a powerful personal impact, from boosting confidence to feeling more actively engaged as a citizen.

Munro Moffat is one such example. Munro spent a year in Iceland volunteering on an EVS placement with the Reykjavik Red Cross. During this time, he helped 24 resettled refugees to integrate into their new country.

Munro says:

“I left Iceland confident that not only had I enjoyed a fantastic year, but that I had also made an impact in my area of work. My year of volunteering left me wiser and more knowledgeable.”

Search for volunteering opportunities at:

europa.eu/youth/volunteering_en



Participant Munro Moffat helped refugees in Iceland