

EXPLOITATION MEETING

Wed 9 November 2011, London

Suggestions for second phase of collaboration for VALUE members

Sabine Remdisch, Leuphana University

The participating organisations have reported on their respective national volunteering systems and lifelong learning activities. The following projects would take advantage of the network and exploit the knowledge accumulated:

1. The first step would be to make a benchmark study of the different volunteering programs. This project would look at volunteering models in the EU to establish, for example, standards and quality criteria, success factors, learning outcomes for volunteers, results for organisations. What do the programs have in common and where do they differ? What sectors organise volunteering (state, private, religious...) What areas of work are they active in? Finally what qualities are essential and central to sustainable volunteering programs? The research would involve a systematic comparison of best practices by country, after initially setting up a mapping system and establishing relevant points for comparison.
2. A further project would be to identify learning outcomes for volunteers using data on volunteering from across the EU/participating countries. The research would involve looking at the actual programs to compare what kind of training is provided before volunteers start working, including how training is organised (formal and informal modalities) and who provides it. The aim would be to identify what learning outcomes are required of volunteers and to formulate a competency profile for "the optimal volunteer", e.g. motivational factors, intellectual skills, key personal qualities, specific qualities for different fields of volunteering. This information would then form the basis for a third collaboration for the VALUE participants.
3. On the basis of such a competency profile, it should be possible to offer volunteers recognition of prior learning towards higher education study, a practice which could act as an incentive, attracting and rewarding volunteers from amongst the student population. Universities need accreditation procedures and regulations for recognising prior learning. Research should compare different EU university lifelong learning policies to see where and how advanced placement/credit for prior learning is currently offered for learning in voluntary work.
4. A fourth step would be to look at the developments in each country to compare the methods used to attract and motivate new volunteers. Germany is currently a very interesting case for study. In July 2011, Germany sees an end to compulsory military service (since 1956) and the alternative social service option (since 1983) which was required of all young males. Over 30 % of young males chose to provide social or other services instead of military service. This dramatic change will lead to a sudden manpower gap in community service which society must find a way to fill.

A brief description of the project / collaboration I would like to develop

Andrea Waxenegger, University of Graz, Center for Continuing Education
August 2011

The active participation in the VALUE project has been inspiring and fruitful. For the first time – sharing this experience with my colleagues at the Center and with other experts in the field – we looked more closely at the volunteering sector at national level and in addition learned from volunteering sector colleagues from other countries and at European level. VALUE succeeded in bringing experts from the two sectors together, learning from and about each other and also producing concrete documentation of this process (national reports, sub-group reports, website, etc.). As a provider of learning opportunities we, i.e. the Center for Continuing Education, are requested to reflect how this learning experience at European level can have an impact at institutional level, above all at programme level. The VALUE project (among other sources) inspired us to explore possibilities for new provision in learning in later life focusing on issues related to volunteering. We already have been offering the programme “Vita activa – Bridging generations through learning” for adults of all age groups, especially older learners who are not only interested in learning about current topics of and latest developments in scientific/academic research but also looking into new possibilities of societal engagement such as volunteering. The programmes 2009/10 and 2010/11 included lectures and workshops where the subject of volunteering as a potential and valuable activity, also in later life, was explicitly addressed.

Focus

Further work at European level in developing concrete learning and personal development opportunities at university level for volunteers, in collaboration with the volunteering sector and under consultation of researchers and the experts of the public sector

Activities

- Share experiences of the developmental work at institutional level within the project partnership and beyond
- Site visits looking at best practice examples abroad
- Design guidelines for developing similar learning opportunities

Outputs

- At institutional level new learning opportunities for volunteers
- Guidelines for those wanting to develop similar activities

The kind of partnership I would like to build

- universities
- volunteer organisations
- researchers from both sectors researching the learning perspective
- experts from public policy from both sectors

Potential funding source

- EU
 - national funding sources
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Volunteering - the core of Lifelong Learning Communities

Piotr Janowski (BPU, Warsaw)

The project enables to share the experience and knowledge through the volunteering practices of different educational and cultural institutions, organizations such as universities, schools, public libraries, ngo. The activities within framework of the project include:

- ◆ workshops on training volunteers,
- ◆ tutoring the leaders of volunteering of institutions participating in the project,
- ◆ exchanging volunteers among partner countries for developing their skills and getting experience in different communities and institutions
- ◆ creating the methods of developing volunteering activities suitable to the needs of the local society and possibilities of the organization.
- ◆ recording and publication of the best practices (dvd and book)
- ◆ publication of useful methods created in the project

We think that the best way for developing our project would be LLP Grundtvig network.

Malgorzata Kolodziejczyk, BPU -*Extract from Word Cafe Notes*

According to the members of one of the discussing group the most important theme, covered by VALUE are older learners because everybody is getting older. Moreover the European Commission designed 2012 as the "European Year for Active Ageing". Active ageing includes creating more opportunities for older people to continue to contribute to society, for example through volunteering. The participants of the discussion suggested to take into consideration the theme of older people when preparing the next common project.

Ruud Duvekot, InHolland University

Extract from email:

- I have been working for quite some time on formulating a framework for 'linkages volunteering and HE by competence-circulation'. I'd be happy to work it out and present it at the November-meeting.

- We were already thinking of the idea of a future project in which credit-transfer between (option 1) volunteering organisations and (option 2) between volunteering organisations and HEIs is based on valuing learning outcomes in each other's learning systems: HEIs with their NQFs and volunteering organisations with their non-formal standards.

Extract from email - Daniela Bosioc, CEV

a) The European Volunteer Measurement Project (EVMP): launched as a collaboration between the European Volunteer Centre (CEV), Centro di Servizio per il Volontario del Lazio (SPES), and the authors of the ILO Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work, the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies (CCSS), currently looking for supporters in all European countries.

The aim of this project is to disseminate this Manual and promote its implementation throughout Europe to help ensure effective management of volunteering by providing better information.

More information: http://www.cev.be/113-economic_value_of_volunteering-EN.html and www.evmp.eu

Current funding only for pilot phase, more funding sought through the European Commission Directorate General Research and Innovation

b) EY2012-European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations: CEV is part of the EY2012 Coalition, which partners the European Commission, in the implementation of activities for the year. EY2012 is to be a chance for all of us to reflect on how Europeans are living longer, staying healthier and to realise the opportunities that represents, promoting intergenerational solidarity by moving the focus from ageing being perceived merely as a threat for individuals and societies and a burden on younger, working people. The year aims at raising awareness, spreading good practice and encouraging policymakers and stakeholders at all levels to facilitate active ageing. Active ageing is a lot about giving older people the chance to participate fully in society and that be achieved inter alia by enabling them to actively contribute through volunteer work.

CEV is calling on partners to join efforts in implementing activities that foster senior volunteering or intergenerational solidarity through volunteering.

More information: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/ey2012.jsp?langId=en>

Funding: European Commission, EU member states specific programmes, if any, and self-funded.

c) European Quality Volunteering Label: One of the recommendations CEV has made for a lasting legacy of EYV2011 is that policy in the field focuses on fostering Quality Volunteering in Europe. In order to achieve that, CEV considers it is key that European Standards for Quality Volunteering are defined and would like to propose the development of the same in partnership with organisations from a number of 'pilot countries' to agree upon.

At this stage it is a project idea which CEV is planning to develop and, end of 2011/beginning of 2012 seek funding for.

Idea for future projects

Ramona Dragomir, Pro Vobis – National Resource Center for Volunteering, Romania
November 2011

Having been a partner in the VALUE project has allowed our organization to on the one hand diversify the range of services offered, by adding a new topic of interests which is lifelong learning, and on the other hand contribute to a shift in the way we plan various volunteer programs in order to include to provide real and meaningful lifelong learning experiences through the volunteer activity. However the topic of lifelong learning in Romania still remains

one that is being explored to a limited extent – it is for this reason that our organization intends to pursue this subject in the following years.

Context

From the perspective of our organization, as a resource centre for volunteer involving organizations (VIOs), it is important that we identify an activity which allows us to work on the professional development of the people involved in the administration and organization of volunteer activities and programs. In this respect, Pro Vobis would like to be able to provide some professional training to the VIOs in order to highlight the opportunity for volunteer activities to provide lifelong learning experiences as well as concentrate more on finding innovative ways of working with elderly volunteers. Getting extra life from extra years implies the idea of active citizenship also after retirement. For this reasons, I would propose to facilitate the development of innovative practices in adult education especially regarding the engagement of older volunteers as well as the provision of lifelong learning experiences through volunteering and their transfer, including from a participating country to others.

Activities

- Identify the training/development needs of VIOs staff related to the provision of adult education related to including a more explicit component of learning opportunities through volunteering
- Organize an workshop with international participation, to explore various best practices examples
- Design guidelines for how to highlight the learning opportunities provided by involvement in volunteer activities

Outputs

- Guidelines for those wanting to develop similar activities
- Create a sort of network of people who will act as multipliers in each local community they are active, to set up new volunteering actions and international/european adult volunteers' exchange.

Potential funding source

- EU – the Grundtvig programme
- national funding sources

Draft proposal for VALUE continuation project: 'Add VALUE' – Alison Hughes, University of Liverpool 4.11.11

As the current contractor/co-ordinator of VALUE we would like to propose a follow-on 3-year 'Multilateral Project' under the Grundtvig strand of the LLL Programme (centralised action) as follows:

- Possibly UoL to be contractor-co-ordinator (AJH with budgeted admin assistance also) of a **small** partnership of circa max. 6 full members (would be equal balance hopefully e.g.3 universities – incl UoL- and 3 voluntary organisations [VOs]), drawn from existing VALUE partner base or those we have been working with. European-level networks (e.g. EUCEN and CEV) probably additional to the 6. UoL not just co-ordinating but also undertaking some of the partner work (AJH / CS).

Focused work with concrete outputs that will directly benefit all partners i.e.

- **Handbook -Toolkit developed by the universities** - could include

- How volunteers / managers of volunteers can meaningfully access ULLL – e.g. getting to know university language, processes etc
 - Model pathways for volunteers to access ULLL (e.g. APEL related)
 - Examples of tailored modules or syllabus that could be used– e.g. possibly based around UoL reflective and/or independent study and also modules used/developed by other partners
 - Staff training re cross-sectoral collaborative working
 - Piloting of tailored modules and/or staff training – to review possibilities of cross-transfer of models and practice within the partnership & across EU countries
 - Relevance of Euro CV/ Passport / Diploma Supplement
 - In-depth case studies
 - Reflections on the piloting – from a few perspectives
- **Toolkit developed by the voluntary organisations** -could include
 - In-depth issues for volunteers wanting to access ULLL e.g.
 - In for for unis re getting to know VO languages, processes, funding etc
 - In-depth case studies

VOs to give input into the bid re to what else would be included
 - **Possibly specific themes** – eg 2012 is EU year of active ageing and 2013 is active citizenship – these could be 2 themes to reflect in one or both handbooks as specific pilots/case studies.
- Also possible focus in some elements of the handbooks/modules on **specific sectors** within volunteering to work with e.g. links with museums through.
- These **toolkits would be reviewed by the partners cross- sector through study visits** to see and test the handbooks in action.
 - **Piloting / reviewing by peers** - eg by other universities/ voluntary organisations in the pnr countries
 - **Focused research and reflection on recent EU LLLP-funded projects** relevant to volunteering / ULLL to inform the development of the 2 handbooks, identifying issues to address.
 - **Questionnaires** – to send out prior to development of handbook - to other universities/ voluntary organisations in the pnr countries – asking for their views on what they would want to see in the final toolkit
 - An additional **small group of Associate (Affiliate) Partners** and/or individual experts – for whom partnership contracts and in-depth info for the bid / project are not required and they can be drawn in as required. They are not directly funded as partners but budgeted e.g. for attendance at one meeting or provision of a paper.