

Volunteer Coordinators' Network meeting held in person at One Westminster main office on 20 October 2022, from 2pm to 3.30pm

Chair: Toni McSherry

Facilitators: Peshang Arkawazi, Nigel Barber

In this network meeting, we focused on the topic Equity and Inclusion, and looked at how to integrate this across member organisations' activities including volunteer recruitment strategy.

Our guest speaker Christine Goodall from HEAR Equality and Human Rights Network spoke about

1. Why is diversity (in terms of characteristics such as age, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and social class and life experience) within your volunteers important?
2. Aiming for equality of access to the volunteering opportunities, but this is not necessarily achieved by treating everyone equally! Different people may need different action to be taken, or be given different support, at some or all stages in the volunteer journey.
3. Equality monitoring
4. The social model of disability says that people are not disabled by their impairments or health conditions, but the structures put in place by society that hamper or prevent their full participation and inclusion.
5. Avoid making assumptions
6. Nobody is expected to be an 'expert' in everything.
7. Not every means of support has a cost.

Our guest speaker then facilitated a discussion with the Volunteer Coordinators around the importance of an inclusive work environment in the voluntary sector:

- Volunteer Coordinators shared their organisations' strategies on how they promote Equity/Inclusion in their workplace and how they operate and implement their practices.
- Challenges and barriers to Equity/Inclusion were discussed and tips were given on how to overcome them

Action:

- A briefing (toolkits/guidance) will be shared after the meeting about what steps might be useful in aiding inclusivity when involving volunteers

In the last half hour of the session, the following general points were discussed:

1. **Team London:** In March this year, Simply Connect (part of Team London) was awarded grant funding from the Greater London Authority to explore the development of a Pan-London gateway into volunteering. They have been consulting

with VCSE organisations, volunteers and GLA staff to review the current offer and to get feedback on what is needed. An online workshop will take place on, Thursday 3 November from 1.30pm to 2.30pm; this will provide the opportunity for you to feed in your views and the findings will be presented from the consultation in due course. To register, please follow this link: <https://forms.gle/PbpYiqjm9MWGHaa07>

2. **London's Lifelines campaign:** This aims to celebrate and to tell the story of all London's lifelines, from those who literally save lives to those who are lifesavers in other ways. For further details visit: <https://londonlifelines.org/about-the-campaign/>
3. **Q & A sessions:** One Westminster facilitates online Q&A sessions for charity organisations to present their work/available volunteering roles and clients who are interested in volunteering. To register and book a slot to attend the next online session please contact Peshang: p.arkawazi@onewestminster.org.uk
4. **Next One Westminster Volunteer Fair** will be in Spring 2023 – date and time tbc
5. **Free Training sessions on Recruiting and Retaining workshop and Managing Challenging Volunteers** will be running in the first quarter of 2023 – dates/times tbc

Group members shared other ways to reward volunteers:

1. **Room to Reward:** Room to Reward is a unique volunteer-recognition charity created to say 'thank you' to the Hidden Heroes – inspirational volunteers who give up their time to make a difference to those who need it most. Check out [Unsold Hotel Rooms for Volunteer Recognition-Room to Reward](#)
2. **One Westminster's Time & Talents** organises corporate - community engagement events to facilitate support for those charities and community groups with limited resource to arrange giveaway goodie bags. For more info contact: timeandtalents@onewestminster.org.uk
3. **Hear Equality and Human Rights Network** has been helping to promote the Unconnected programme, which can provide free SIMS with calls and data for charities and community groups, either for organisations or to distribute to members and beneficiaries. Details can be found at: <https://www.theunconnected.org/> or you can contact founder **Ben Mansell** direct for more information at bmansell@theunconnected.org or call **07789 796650**
4. **Please give feedback** on this network meeting to enable us to improve our service. An **Evaluation form** will be sent by email.
5. **The next Volunteer Coordinators meeting:** Will be held in person Feb 2023 (date to be confirmed).

List of attendees:

<i>First Name</i>	<i>Last Name</i>	<i>Job Title</i>	<i>Current Employer</i>	<i>Email</i>
Nicola	McCausland	Volunteering Lead	Central London Samaritans	n.mccausland@cls.org.uk
Fay	McDermott	Programme Coordinator (Volunteer Manager)	Two Temple Place	fay@twotempleplace.org
Nadege	Cover	Trustee	The Amethyst Foundation	amyfoundation@hotmail.com
Sylvia	Velasquez	Volunteer Coordinator	Asylum Aid	sylvia.velasquez@asylumaid.org.uk
Sam	Curtis	Director	Resonate Arts (Westminster Arts)	sam@resonatearts.org
Valerie	Chang	Volunteer Coordinator – Westminster Connects	Westminster City Council	vchang@westminster.gov.uk
Nawaal	Qureshi	Volunteer Coordinator	Family Friends	nawaal@familyfriends.uk.com
Finn	Arschavir	Volunteer Coordinator	The Courtauld	finnarschavir@gmail.com
Holly	Henry	Heritage, Learning and Volunteer Manager	Grand Junction at St Mary Magdalene's	holly@grandjunction.org.uk
TONI	MCSHERRY	Volunteer Development Officer	Home-Start Westminster	toni@hswestminster.co.uk
Nigel	Barber	Volunteer Services Manager	One Westminster	n.barber@onewestminster.org.uk
Eshita	Unadkat	Senior Social Prescriber	One Westminster	e.unadkat@onewestminster.org.uk
Peshang	Arkawazi	Volunteer Service Officer	One Westminster	peshang.arkawazi@gmail.com
Ali	Mohamed	Director	Africa Refugees Project	alimohamed51@yahoo.co.uk
Mervat	Khalil	Interior Designer	Egyptian Lotus Association	khalil.mervat@yahoo.com
Christine	Goodall	Network Coordinator	Hear Equality	christine@hearequality.org.uk