***Volunteer Coordinators' Network meeting held in person at One Westminster main office – The Stowe Centre on 20 November 2024, 2:30pm to 4.00pm***

***Chair:*** Holly Henry

***Facilitator:*** Peshang Arkawazi

***First item on the agenda:***

***Natalie Watkins,*** *an Organisation Support Officer at One Westminster has introduced the new Westminster Connects volunteering platform, how this platform enables organisations to register and post volunteer opportunities.*

***Practical Demo Components:***

**Access the Platform:** Visit the Westminster Connects Volunteering Platform.

* Guide through the steps on how to create an account, complete Registration.
* Approval Process: after submission, registration will be reviewed.

**Promoting Volunteer Opportunities:**

* Post Opportunities: Once registered, you can post detailed descriptions of volunteer roles, including responsibilities, required skills.
* Engage with Volunteers: Interested volunteers can apply directly through the platform. Applications can be reviewed, communicate with potential volunteers, and manage your volunteer efficiently.

Additional Support:

* One Westminster Provide ongoing support to help effective implementation of registration process
* Offering one-on-one training sessions to help organisations understand how to navigate the volunteering platform and demonstrating key features including content development.
* *Positive feedback: user friendly*
* *Negative feedback: Potential disengagement with a volunteer application process when the used inbox not managed by the same recruiting email inbox. This disconnect can lead to delays, miscommunication, or missed opportunities, discouraging both volunteers and recruiters.*
* *Using a newsletter as the preferred way of promotion*

***Second item on the agenda:***

One Westminster Volunteers’ Fair (October): ***Led by Nigel Barber, Volunteer Service Team Leader***

The One Westminster Volunteers’ Fair held in October provided an excellent opportunity for local organisations to connect with prospective volunteers.

Below is a summary of key discussion points and feedback collected from the volunteer coordinators who attended the Fair:

* Turnout: A high number of attendees, including individuals from diverse backgrounds and skill sets.
* Variety of Organisations: A wide range of volunteer sectors were represented, ensuring something for everyone.
* Engagement: Many visitors expressed genuine interest in the volunteering opportunities on display.
* Strengthens community links and collaboration across sectors.
* Great way to Promote organisations service and their impact
* How the use of QR-code eased the registration process
* Refer and redirect volunteers to the right organisations

**Event success stories (Volunteer placements):**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Age UK Westminster | 3 placements out of 17 registrations |
| Westminster Libraries | 5 placements out of 100 registrations |
| Unfold | 3 placements out of 20 registrations |
| Handel and Hendrix | 4 placements out of 9 registrations |
| St Vincent’s Family Project | 1 placement out of 25 registrations |
| The Guards Museum | 7 Placements |
| Grand Junction | 4 placements |

***News and Update including:***

* Upcoming Recruiting & Retaining Volunteers workshop in the next quarter.

***Action:***

To enhance the usability of a **demo website:**

* Add more options to the area of interest dropdown list
* Add Direct Links: hyper link or button of the platform on the Council website
* Refresh opportunity page and display new uploaded opportunities on the top of the page
* Connect the new platform with the other recruitment website

Future workshop training session

* Peshang will be sending invite emails regarding the upcoming training session closer to the date.

Others:

* Eastern Sudan community association and Eritrean Elderly welfare Association 50+ have been advised to get in touch with CVS team for more information about Funding how to target a segmented group within a community to support their projects.

**List of Attendees:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **First Name** | **Last Name** | **Job Title** | **Current Employer** |
| Ali | Khair | Trustees | Eastern Sudan community association |
| Grace | Nuttall | Volunteer Coordinator | Age UK Westminster |
| Ilaria | Parrini | Senior Family Support Worker | St Vincent's Family Project |
| Raymond | Lau | Head of Volunteering | Diversity Role Models |
| Mahbuba | Khan | Community & Outreach Manager | Westminster Libraries and Archives |
| Olivia | Collins | Visitor Experience Coordinator | The Guards Musem |
| Brian | Watts | Director for People | LDN |
| Rebecca | Stephenson French | Visitor Experience and Operations Manager | Handel Hendrix House |
| Millie | Morfitt | Volunteer Coordinator | Unfold |
| Khalid | Mohamed | Training teams | Eastern Sudan community association |
| Aniqa | Akther | Recruitment Officer | LDN |
| Eyob | Tesfazghi | Chairman | Eritrean Elderly welfare Association 50+ |
| Holly | Henry | Heritage, Learning and Volunteer Manager | Grand Junction at St Mary Magdalene's |
| Nigel | Barber | Volunteer Services Manager | One Westminster |
| Shirin | Talwar | Org Support | One Westminster |
| Natalie | Watkins | Speaker – Organisation Support Officer | One Westminster |
| Peshang | Arkawazi | Facilitator – Volunteer Service Team | One Westminster |
| Paola | Pagliarin | Corporate Partnerships Manager | One Westminster |