

What do Volunteer Centres do?

Volunteer Centres (sometimes known as volunteer bureaux or volunteer development agencies) provide support at a local level for individual volunteers and volunteer organisations. They have six core functions:

- 1. Brokerage**
VDAs primary function is to match both individuals and groups interested in volunteering with appropriate opportunities in the local community. VDAs hold information on a comprehensive range of opportunities. They offer potential volunteers support and advice matching their motivation to volunteer with appropriate volunteering opportunities.
- 2. Marketing volunteering**
VDAs stimulate and encourage local interest in volunteering and community activity. This may include promoting and marketing volunteering through local, regional and national events and campaigns. VDAs will manage and promote a national brand for volunteering.
- 3. Good practice development**
VDAs promote good practice in working with volunteer organisations. They deliver training and accreditation for potential volunteers, volunteer managers and the volunteering infrastructure.
- 4. Develop volunteering opportunities**
VDAs work in close partnership with statutory, voluntary and private sector agencies as well as community groups and faith groups to develop local volunteering opportunities. VDAs understand the potential offered by the local communities and work with them to realise this potential. VDAs will target specific groups which face barriers to volunteering. VDAs work creatively to develop imaginative, non-formal opportunities for potential volunteers.
- 5. Policy response and campaigning**
VDAs identify proposals or legislation that may impact on volunteering. It will lead and/or participate in campaigns on issues that affect volunteers or volunteering. VDAs campaign proactively for a more volunteer-literate and volunteer-friendly climate.
- 6. Strategic development of volunteering**
As the local expert on volunteering VDAs inform strategic thinking and planning at a regional and national level.