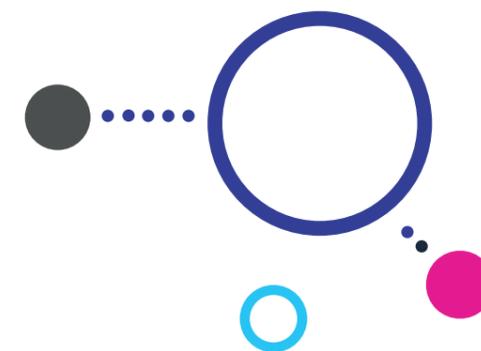


March 2019

Insight

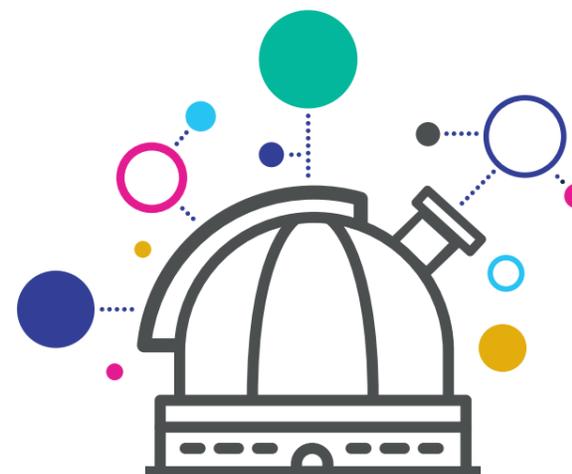
Youth Volunteering Innovation Project





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Foreword

Young Scot and ProjectScotland are incredibly pleased that Scottish Government invested in the Youth Volunteering Innovation Project.

Average volunteering rates in Scotland have been static now for more than ten years and if we are to change this, we must try new things, and bring in new perspectives. Youth engagement in volunteering is higher than any other group, (48% compared with an overall rate of 28%; Household Survey 2017), and we know that young people are passionate about good causes, engaged in their local communities, and motivated to improve the society they live in. So, why not get them engaged in shaping the future of volunteering?

Giving young people the opportunity to help shape the future of an important area for Scotland gives us new and exciting solutions. Young people bring a valuable mix of creativity, views and experiences, and a 'question everything' attitude to the table, which often results in amazing new ideas for how we do things.

Young Scot's co-design service has been empowering young people to get involved in decision-making at all levels for over five years now, and their thoughts and ideas have had positive impacts on a wide variety of organisations and sectors. ProjectScotland is embracing the opportunity to have their own volunteers design simple, yet effective changes to their own service that have made a real difference to the support they provide for young people. The YouthVIP group's dedication to the co-design process that has led to this report has been outstanding, and they have all worked incredibly hard to listen to other young people and a variety of stakeholders. The project has led to a huge amount of learning and shared understanding for both the young people and those fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to work with them on this brief.



ProjectScotland and Young Scot have significant experience of the benefits that young volunteers can bring to an organisation, and the huge benefits for those taking part; it develops skills, builds friendships, decreases the risk of isolation and empowers people to make change in their communities. The YouthVIP team, along with ProjectScotland and Young Scot, believe that more young people should be supported to volunteer and contribute their perspectives, skills and talents to their local communities.

Unfortunately, not every young person is able to access volunteering opportunities or doesn't feel as if volunteering is for them. The YouthVIP team therefore sought to address issues like the under representation (outside of school) of young people from lower-SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) areas, those with a disability and black and minority ethnic (BAME) groups, and, perhaps most tellingly, the lack of quality opportunities for young people, particularly under 16s.

This is perhaps our biggest opportunity as a sector. If we can address these barriers at the earliest age, so people from all backgrounds get access to the life changing benefits of volunteering, we could encourage not only a significant rise in engagement, but the start of a lifelong participation in communities and causes throughout Scotland. We're excited to create the space for young people to debate key issues and present their insight, expertise and ideas. Each one of their recommendations provides food for thought, encourages collaboration and innovation, and challenges us to maintain the involvement of young people in decision-making.

Paul Reddish,
ProjectScotland
Chief Executive

Louise Macdonald, OBE,
Young Scot
Chief Executive

Introduction

As part of the development of a new National Volunteering Framework, Scottish Government commissioned ProjectScotland and Young Scot to work together to establish a national youth volunteering design team - a group of young volunteers from a variety of backgrounds living across Scotland.

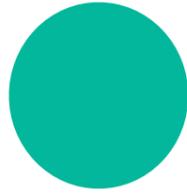
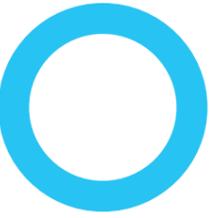
The design team were recruited in July 2018 and taken through Young Scot's Co-design process (Appendix A) over the course of the subsequent six months. The team chose the name Youth Volunteering Innovation Project (YouthVIP), and met regularly to develop their knowledge of volunteering and the challenges faced by young people. The YouthVIP team were supported on their journey by an Advisory Board of key stakeholders (Appendix B), who provided invaluable insight and feedback to the group as they progressed.

In early 2019, the team finalised 13 recommendations to pass to Scottish Government, and these were launched at a National Discussion Day on 27th March 2019.





Young People's Vision for the Future of Volunteering



For the **YouthVIP** team, the future of volunteering is one where all volunteers are supported to develop personally and professionally through their roles by trained and knowledgeable staff in the voluntary sector, where all volunteer roles are accessible to all, where schools play a key role in opening up the world of volunteering to young people, and where volunteering is celebrated by the public and private sectors.





Youth Volunteering Innovation Project Team

Aaron Fernandez, 22, Glasgow

"I wanted to learn more about the current state of youth volunteering in Scotland and help to shape its future for the better. I liked how youth participation was so integral to the process of creating our recommendations, and hope that in the future more young people see volunteering as not just another addition to your CV, but a way to improve your personal growth."

Cian Gullen, 19, Galashiels

"I was inspired to get involved in the project because of my past experiences volunteering. I think the highlight for me has been learning about other people's experiences and building a close relationship with everyone in the group. My hope for the future of youth volunteering is that young people are encouraged to continue volunteering with the amazing support we already have being increased to allow for more young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to take part."

Katrina Lambert, 18, Edinburgh

"I was inspired to get involved in the project because I am passionate about both volunteering and young people having a say in decisions that affect them - YouthVIP seemed like a brilliant opportunity to combine these two things! My highlight from the project was the opportunity to show decision-makers the power and motivation that young people have to change the world around them. In the future, I hope that young volunteers feel supported in their roles and that more young people are exposed to the amazing opportunities that volunteering provides."

Laura MacPherson Zieger, 18, Inverness

"Through trying to get involved with volunteering at a young age, I became aware of how many restrictions there are - this was really frustrating when I was trying to get involved with stuff. I think that your teenage years are the perfect time to volunteer and for that reason I wanted to help to make it better. I really enjoyed meeting new people and hearing about their experiences of volunteering, and just finding out more about the third sector. I hope that volunteering will become a core part of the school curriculum and that the majority of young people will get to experience it in some form."

Natalie McBride, 17, Fife

"My volunteering experience has been the making of me and the most rewarding thing I have ever done with my life. I wanted to get involved in the project because I wanted to ensure more people have had the experiences I have had. It has been a truly exceptional experience and one I will never forget. I want volunteering in Scotland to become more accessible to everyone so that all people regardless of age and background can get involved in something that interests them. I want to see volunteering help make Scotland a better place."

Nicole McMahon, 26, East Ayrshire

"I was inspired to get involved simply to help get more people volunteering in Scotland. I wanted to try and help make volunteering FUN, more accessible for all and increase awareness of the opportunities out there. There's a lot already being done but there certainly is a lot more we can do with education, communication and encouragement towards volunteering. My hope for the future youth in Scotland is that they find it strange not to volunteer their time during summers, after school, after work. Doing good, feeling good."

Beth Henderson, 17, Edinburgh

"My hard working mum, who's worked in the third sector for the last 30 years and is passionate about what charities can achieve, inspired me to get involved in YouthVIP. Getting to know a group of people who I might not otherwise have had the opportunity to meet has been fantastic, and I hope to see a more inclusive future - with a wider variety of opportunities that are accessible to all children and young people - wherever they are, whatever age, whatever background."

Davie McKinnon, 18, Dundee

"I was inspired by previous work I have done with Young Scot, knowing how young people's voices are listened to in projects like this. My highlight of the project was our last residential as we all clicked and have made lasting friendships. I hope that from our work any person could do any voluntary role they wanted, no matter their circumstances."

Kelly MacKay, 17, Isle of Harris

"I wanted to get involved in this project as I've personally got so much out of volunteering and I wanted to give something back to help allow all young people to have the same chance. My highlight was attending and speaking at my first conference, it was a nerve-wracking day, but it's helped me become much more confident in public speaking - something I'd try to avoid before this project - as well as getting to meet and learn from so many remarkable young people from across the country. I really hope that in the future, stigma and barriers around youth volunteering are completely eradicated and that it is promoted equally to work opportunities."

Liana McBride, 15, Fife

"I was inspired to get involved because I want to have an impact on not only the volunteers of today, but the volunteers of tomorrow. The highlight of the project for me, wasn't just the outcome, but getting the opportunity to meet with people from all across Scotland and being able to form such an amazing team. I hope that in the future more youths will part take in volunteering to fight the unfairly placed stigma attached to youths, and that volunteering collectively becomes more accepting of us youths."

Nate Maxwell, 18, Falkirk

"I've been active in the voluntary sector since my 4th year of high school, and it's something that is very important to me and I am passionate about it and passionate about getting young people involved. I want to be involved in this project because I want the opportunity to change volunteering for young people, promote it and help make it more accessible. I want to be involved in something that I'm passionate about, and help other young people who want to make a difference. I would make volunteering something easier to access in one's own community."

Rachael Hatfield, 19, Inverness

"I was inspired to take part in this project as it seemed different to other things I've done in the past. My highlight has definitely got to be working with some of the most amazing young people in Scotland! My hope for the future of youth volunteering is that more people get involved, and see there should be no barriers!"

Anna Jamieson, 16, Edinburgh

Bethany Spain, 17, Stirling

Caelan Smith, 17, Dundee

James Powell, 21, Dundee

Leah Kennedy, 17, Stirling

Michael Gowan, 25, Dumfries

Wajeעה Naeem, 16, Falkirk





Recommendations

The YouthVIP team developed the following 13 recommendations, which are designed to complement each other in encouraging more young people across Scotland to volunteer, or improving the experience of young people who do currently volunteer. In addition to the beneficial impact on youth volunteering, the YouthVIP team hope that the recommendations will have a positive effect on volunteering across all age ranges.

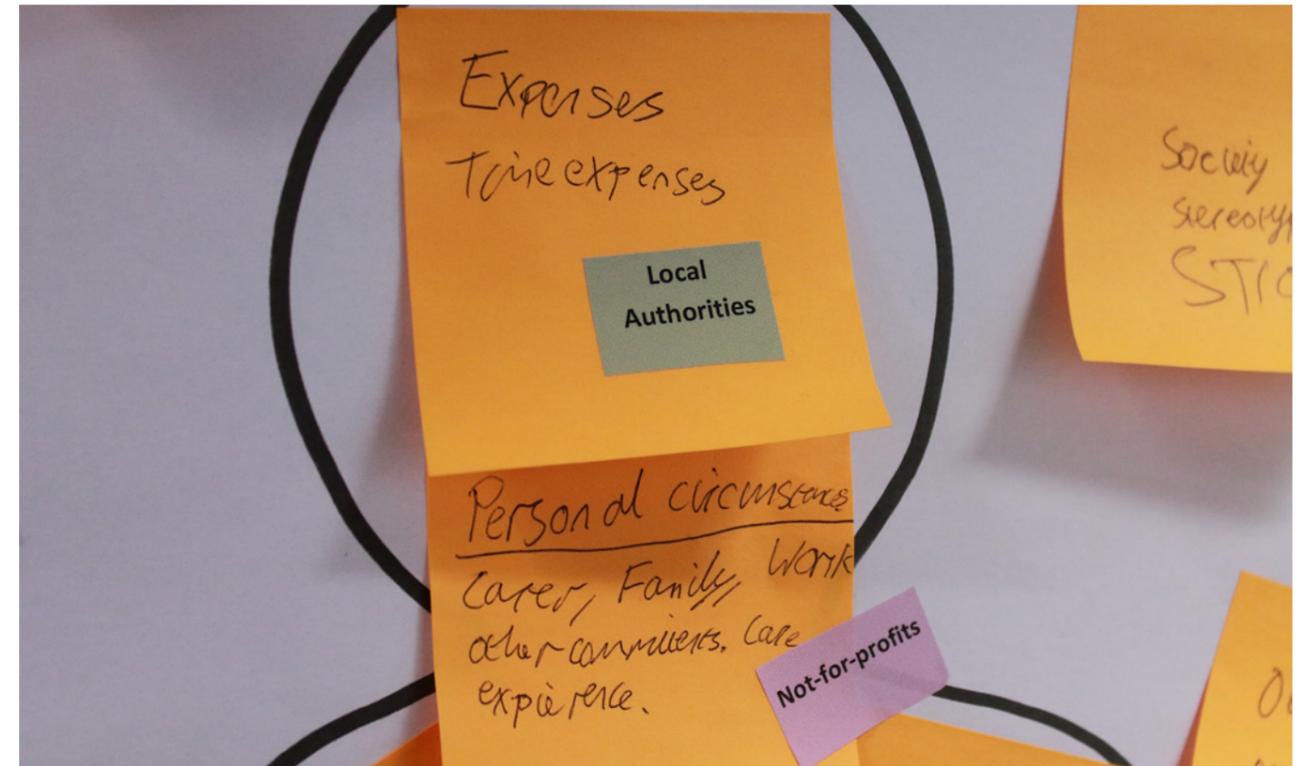
Training for voluntary organisations on youth inclusion – a standardised programme of training available to all voluntary organisations aiming to upskill organisations to enable them to be more inclusive of young people. The training would involve a combined ‘in-person’ and e-learning approach, and would be aimed at those who work directly with volunteers, as well as senior staff responsible for strategy and policy, and trustee board members. The training could cover a wide variety of topics, but key areas to include would be:

- » supporting young people with protected characteristics and those who are care experienced
- » supporting and developing young volunteers (particularly those with access to volunteering awards)
- » Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) checks and other legal issues related to young people
- » information and practical ideas on how to make trustee boards and other meetings more appealing to, and accommodating of young people

Training content would be co-produced with young people to ensure their experiences are being addressed, and completing the training could form part of an organisation’s drive to achieve a quality assurance mark.

Develop guidelines on supporting young volunteers – as young volunteers frequently have different needs and experiences to adult volunteers, a set of guidelines accessible by voluntary organisations can provide a guide to best practice in dealing with young volunteers. These guidelines would be co-written with young people to highlight areas of specific concern and provide practical advice on how to attract and keep young volunteers.

Local area network meetings – the meetings would serve a dual purpose; the first to provide an opportunity for training and skills sharing for volunteer managers within each Local Authority, giving volunteer managers an opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge about working with young people, supporting young people while volunteering, and promoting volunteering to diverse groups of young people both online and offline. The second purpose is to provide a local forum for moving forward strategic ideas and developing the implementation of the YouthVIP recommendations and outcomes from the National Volunteering Framework. The involvement of young people and young volunteers in the hosting of these meetings would be encouraged.



Legacy group of young people to oversee implementation of recommendations – a group of young people from across Scotland convened to ensure a continued youth voice in the implementation of the recommendations, and to support the delivery of Scottish Government’s National Outcomes Framework. The membership of the group would change over time, and new members provided with training and support. The overall group would also need administrative and logistical support. The legacy group would be responsible for convening an annual summit to review the progress different organisations have made against the recommendations, and would work on implementing the recommendations in collaboration with key organisations and stakeholders.

Annual volunteering summit – the summit would be organised by the legacy group and be a chance for the volunteering sector to come together and review progress against the objectives set out in the volunteering framework and the recommendations from the YouthVIP group. The agenda for each annual summit would vary depending on the specific objectives that have been set out for that year, and it would be important to tour different locations to enable organisations from all over the country to take part. Young people in the legacy group would be a driving force for each summit and decide on the agenda, and representatives from a range of organisations asked to attend to report to the community on their progress.

Review of quality assurance marks for voluntary organisations – review current quality assurance marks like the Volunteer Friendly (VF) Awards and Investing in Volunteering (IiV) with a view to introducing criteria which focuses on supporting young volunteers, and criteria, or more weight to existing criteria, which focuses on the volunteer experience, rather than policy and strategy. Following this review, work will be needed to increase the esteem with which quality assurance marks are held, increasing their worth with grant funders as well as voluntary organisations and volunteers.

To enable small organisations with few resources to attain a quality assurance mark and compete with larger organisations, quality assurance criteria should be adapted for different sized organisation and a tiered rating system created which informs the public. Quality assurance marks should be incorporated into opportunity listings on Volunteer Scotland’s website to enable people to easily identify organisations with best practice. Volunteers should be encouraged to provide feedback on their experiences in a user-rating system, such as Good HQ, but ideally on the same website as opportunities are advertised to create a ‘one-stop-shop’ for volunteering for the public.

Local area volunteering advisory scheme – this scheme would aim to connect young people both at school, college and university, and those not in education, training or employment, with volunteering opportunities in their local communities. Each council area would have dedicated staff putting this scheme into practice, potentially by streamlining current initiatives, who would use their professional experience and contacts to connect with schools, training providers and employers, as well as the local third sector. Some staff members would ideally be overseeing this scheme at council area level, while other staff embed themselves in local areas and speak to young people directly to link them to appropriate opportunities and support them to overcome barriers to volunteering.

Youth Volunteering Champion schools – develop a set of principles, criteria and guidelines for schools to work towards becoming a Youth Volunteering Champion (YVC) school. To become a YVC school, it would have to adopt volunteering into the school values and working practices, and would need to commit to fulfilling a set of defined outcomes. Each school would be given considerable freedom to decide how to achieve these outcomes, whether that be through offering volunteering awards, embedding volunteering in the curriculum, or by other means. In a similar vein to UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award or LGBT Youth Scotland's School's Charter Mark, the YVC achievement could be staged from Bronze to Gold, and last 3-4 years before reassessment is due

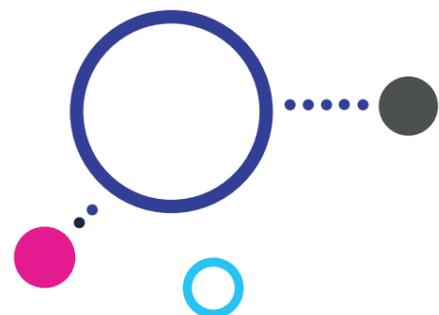
Create a framework to support young people not in education, employment or training, to gain work-based skills and personal development through volunteering – many young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) could benefit from the development opportunities that volunteering affords, and can give them valuable experience in a new context to support their future. A framework aimed at getting as many NEET young people into volunteering roles as possible would set out a series of methods for achieving this goal. While taking part in volunteering, the young people could additionally sit SQA accredited qualifications in core skills to give them a foundation when applying for work, training or education in the future.

Roadshows to promote volunteering in local communities – voluntary organisations to come together and deliver a volunteering event, similar to a Skills Scotland event, working with education providers to get young people to attend and talk to charities and not-for-profits, to discover how to find and apply for volunteering roles, and generally promote the benefits of volunteering. Voluntary organisations would be asked to deliver engagement activities suitable for young people, to engage them in the causes they support. Roadshows would go all over the country and events would be tailored to the local community and the organisations based there.

Dedicated access fund for voluntary organisations – this access fund could be applied to by any charity who fulfil a set of criteria, and used to support volunteer accessibility by providing money for transport, childcare, additional needs support, or removing other barriers to access. The criteria for the applying charity should take into account annual turnover, favouring charities who currently struggle to provide volunteer expenses due to tight budgets. The access fund should be monitored on a regular basis to ensure funds are being spent correctly and be available to all not-for-profit organisations, not just registered charities.

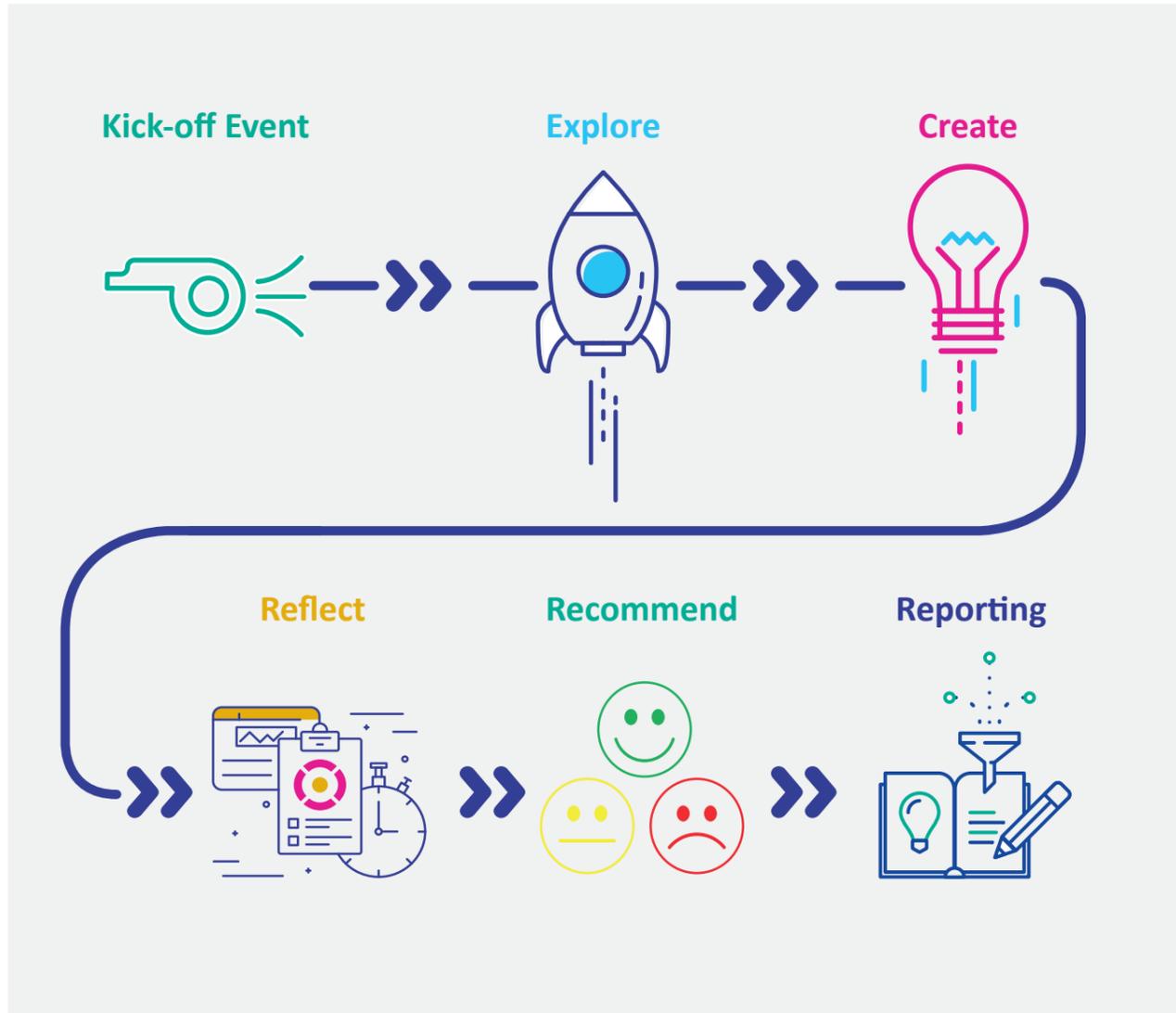
National forum for businesses and the third sector – this forum would bring together the business and third sectors every quarter to jointly identify, develop and implement volunteering programmes for the benefit of staff and the local community, such as employer supported volunteering schemes delivered in partnership with local charities, or policies which engage staff in social responsibility efforts. This integration can cover topics such as staff volunteering times, corporate social responsibility, volunteering as access to employment, volunteering for staff development, and volunteering as equally valuable to work experience for young applicants. The two sectors would be able to foster mutual understanding as complimentary forces working towards the aim of upskilling people and developing the workforce.

Pilot scheme to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to develop working practices which will support – many SMEs are unable to support their staff to volunteer due to the loss of work hours involved. This pilot scheme would aim to use experts to consult with SMEs to support them to adapt their working practices to reduce the impact on productivity of staff volunteering during work hours. The benefits of staff taking on volunteering during work hours, especially for young workers, is the professional development and skills learning gained through taking part in new activities and roles. The pilot scheme would be reviewed to judge its effectiveness, with the aim to roll the scheme out across Scotland.



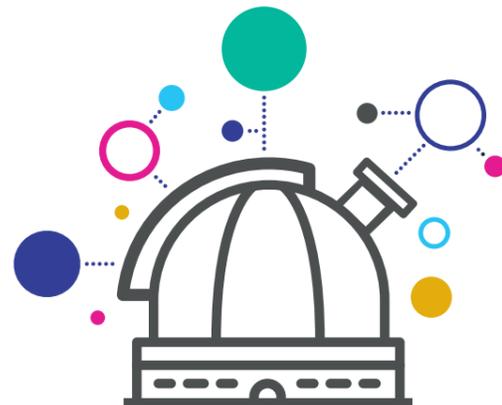


Method



Recruitment – July 2018

The YouthVIP team began their journey through Young Scot's co-design process by attending the first of five residential weekends. The group themselves ranged in age from 15 to 25 and hailed from across Scotland, each bringing their own unique experiences of volunteering to the group. Alongside the YouthVIP team, an Advisory Board was convened by ProjectScotland to meet after each YouthVIP residential and provide advice and reflections on the group's ideas and questions.



Explore – September to October 2018

At the first 'kick-off' residential, the YouthVIP team began exploring their understandings of volunteering, developed their visions for the future of volunteering, and looked at the different organisations involved in the voluntary sector. The second residential in early September 2018 continued this exploration journey, as the team began to look at volunteer pathways and the factors which motivate people to volunteer. They identified barriers to volunteering and looked at which organisations could influence or impact these barriers.

Following these two sessions, the YouthVIP team developed a youth volunteering survey which was hosted on Young Scot's online platform, and attracted around 180 responses from young people across the country (demographics in Appendix C). The team members were also invited to conduct interviews with a variety of stakeholders from different sectors; Scottish Government, third sector organisations, the business community, Local Authorities, third sector interfaces, as well as other groups young people identified by team members in their local area.

In September 2018 a five of the YouthVIP team co-delivered a national conference called the "Creating a More Inclusive Future for Youth Volunteering" with Volunteer Scotland. The outputs from the survey, conference and stakeholder interviews were used as evidence to guide the development of the YouthVIP's ideas.



Create & Reflect – October to November 2018

The next residential took place in October 2018 and provided an opportunity for the YouthVIP team to reflect on their learning and begin to identify the key ideas for change that could break down some of the barriers to volunteering for young people, and encourage more young people to volunteer. From the broad range of ideas that were initially pitched, the team prioritised their ideas and developed the key ones into concepts and prototypes.

Reflect & Recommend – November 2018 to January 2019

This idea development was continued at the November 2018 residential, when the group checked their ideas back against some of the issues explored earlier in the process, and then drafted a set of final recommendations. The recommendations were presented and discussed, with key issues or questions noted for later development. This happened at the final residential in January 2019, where the recommendations were progressed with the assistance of some key stakeholders until the YouthVIP team had a list of thirteen recommendations to pass to Scottish Government and promote to the volunteering sector.



Key themes

The YouthVIP group identified a wide range of factors which might affect the likelihood of someone volunteering and the quality of their experience as a volunteer. Among these factors, certain key themes emerged. The YouthVIP recommendations aim to address each of these key themes with a range of potential actions, and a number of the recommendations address multiple key themes.

Youth volunteer experience

Issue

For many young people, the experience of volunteering itself is one that can have a large impact on whether someone continues to volunteer in the future. A negative volunteer experience could take a number of forms, for example young people feeling that they are looked down upon or that staff members have low expectations of them. Young people may also feel as though organisations don't understand their needs and aren't willing to adapt to them, whether that be additional support in some tasks, flexibility, or reward and recognition. There may also be confusion among some organisations over child protection legislation, Protection for Vulnerable Groups checks, and insurance requirements for under 16s, which can result in organisations not taking on young volunteers as a matter of principle.

Young volunteers can be a great asset however, bringing new skills and perspectives to an organisation, potentially having skills which are in great demand. Being treated with respect and good faith allows young people to meet and exceed the expectations people have of them, and access to training and guidance from a volunteer manager can allow young people to flourish and grow. Organisations can also support young people to work towards a volunteering award or other accreditation, and can provide experiences which will boost a young person's CV for future work and education opportunities.



Vision

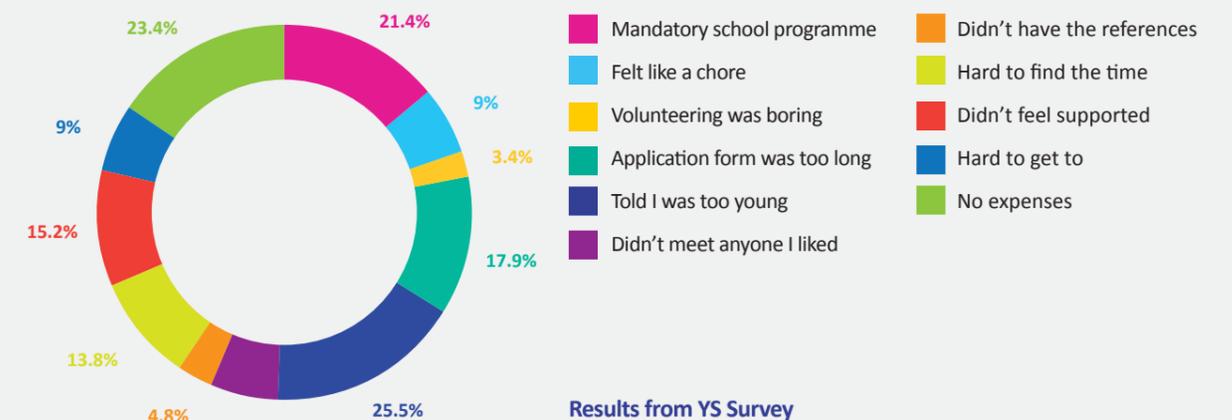
The YouthVIP team wanted to ensure organisations had access to the necessary information and support to ensure their volunteering opportunities provide a great experience for young people. This includes access to training, professional development, peer networking, quality assurance guidance, and local area support. By supporting staff to learn and innovate, the voluntary sector can benefit from new volunteers, be a leading voice for youth inclusion, and learn from young people themselves about how to continually grow and develop. Young people will benefit from a quality volunteering experience where they feel valued and can develop their skills, and these young people will share their experiences, use their skills at work and in education, and continue to volunteer into adulthood.

Recommendations

- » Training for voluntary organisations on youth inclusion
- » Review of quality assurance marks for voluntary organisations
- » Develop guidelines on supporting young volunteers
- » Local area network meetings



Negative experiences of volunteering, for those who have volunteered or are currently volunteering



Results from YS Survey

Personal and professional development through volunteering

Issues

Volunteering can be a great way to gain work experience in different areas, access training, build networks, gain references, and develop personal skills. Despite this, volunteering is often undervalued by education providers or employers, and seen as secondary to work experience. Volunteering is not generally embedded in everyday school life, even though it can open up a range of post-school destinations for young people, provide skills development opportunities for many pupils, and is a potential avenue for schools to deliver the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence – creating successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens.

For those young people in employment, volunteering is often hard to balance with work commitments, with only the largest employers being able to afford staff time off for volunteering. Even in those organisations where staff volunteering schemes exist, it can be difficult for employees to find appropriate placements. However, volunteering can be a valuable opportunity for professional and personal development of employees, and if viewed as an alternative to skills development training can easily justify the associated costs. This kind of staff development opportunity would also enhance corporate responsibility and encourage the retention of staff.

Vision

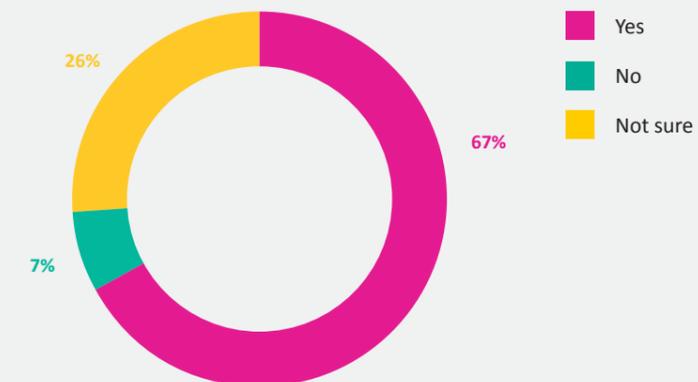
Volunteering is a fantastic way to develop personal skills and attributes, while also getting experience and training to enhance future career prospects. This can be especially true for young people without much work experience. As a result, volunteering should be viewed as a standard route for young people's personal and professional development, allowing them to gain skills and experience outside of the classroom, and enabling them to try out different roles and career options. To support this approach, employers and education providers should be encouraged to view volunteering as of equal value to work experience, and provide young people with the space and time to demonstrate their competencies outside of the classroom or workplace. For those in employment, volunteering provides an alternative route for continuing professional development which should be encouraged as a meaningful alternative to training courses or other staff development days.

Recommendations

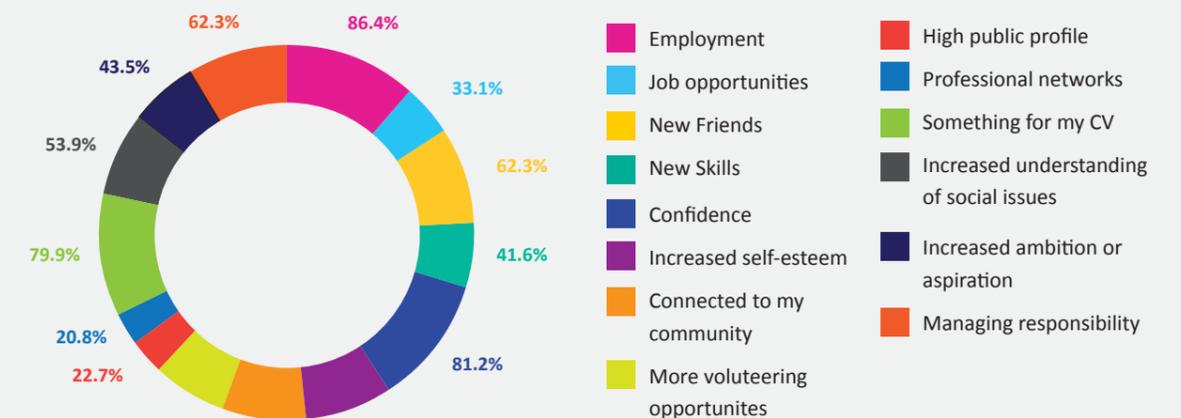
- » Local area volunteering advisory scheme
- » Youth Volunteering Champion schools
- » Create a framework to support young people not in education, employment or training, to gain work-based skills and personal development through volunteering
- » National forum for businesses and the third sector
- » Pilot scheme to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to enable staff to take volunteering days



Percentage of young people who had never volunteered who would be more likely to start if it would increase their chance of getting a job or getting into college/university



Positive outcomes for young people who have volunteered





Stigma surrounding volunteering

Issue

Young people perceive there to be social stigma around volunteering, suggesting that as an activity it lacks acceptance among peers and is not the social norm. This is particularly the case for young people at secondary school level. The stigma is both related to the concept of volunteering itself, as something uncool and not a productive use of time, and to young volunteers as individuals, as middle class and aspirational. ¹To change the culture surrounding volunteering, it would be useful to normalise and promote volunteering to children from a young age, pre-empting the formation of negative attitudes towards volunteering at secondary school level. Creating positive narratives around volunteering, emphasising the opportunities it leads to, and promoting positive role models could also be avenues for further exploration.

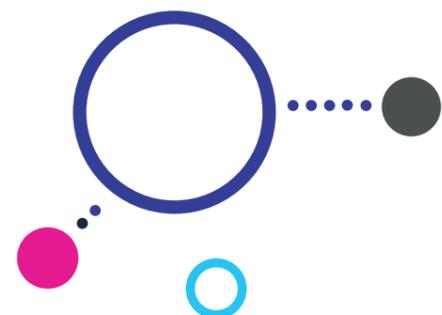
Vision

Reducing the stigma around volunteering is a difficult and complex task, and the young people felt that there were multiple routes to achieve this. One route involves working with schools to establish youth volunteering as a normal part of everyday life, and establishing this at primary school level, as well as in secondary schools, to pre-empt negative mindsets and narratives that develop about volunteering later on. Another route is to provide support and opportunities for young people to take on volunteering in the local community, hear about the benefits of volunteering, and feel like it is a worthwhile endeavour.

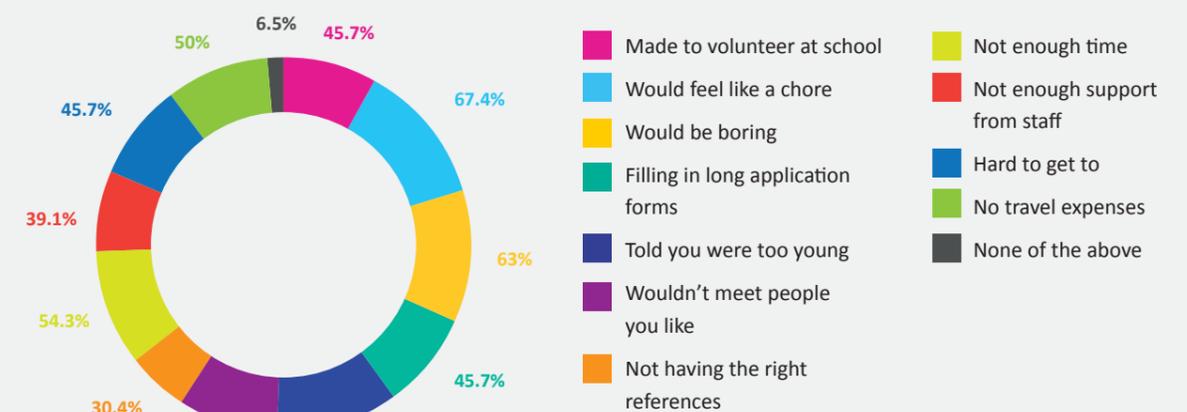
¹<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/for-organisations/research-and-evaluation/publications/youth-volunteering-in-deprived-areas/>

Recommendations

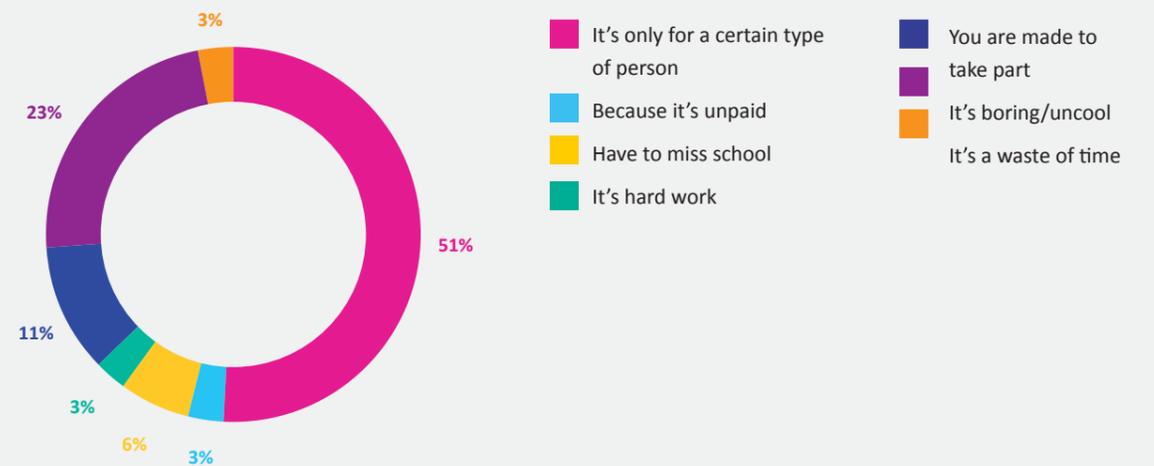
- » Youth Volunteering Champion schools
- » Local area volunteering advisory scheme
- » Roadshows to promote volunteering in local communities



Endorsment of negative perception of volunteering by those who have never volunteered



Reasons for stigma towards volunteering (of those who answered)



To change the culture surrounding volunteering, it would be useful to normalise and promote volunteering to children from a young age, pre-empting the formation of negative attitudes towards volunteering at secondary school level.





Getting into volunteering

Issue

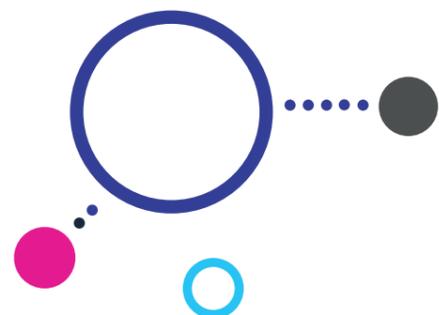
For many young people, the first barrier to becoming a volunteer is finding out about volunteering in the first place. It is a challenge knowing where to look for opportunities and navigating different platforms to find appropriate and interesting opportunities. Many opportunity listings are not written with young people in mind, and are not advertised to young people in the spaces they inhabit, nor is looking at and applying for opportunities facilitated at school. Having multiple platforms to check for opportunities, long application forms, and reference requirements can act as barriers for young people interested in volunteering.

Vision

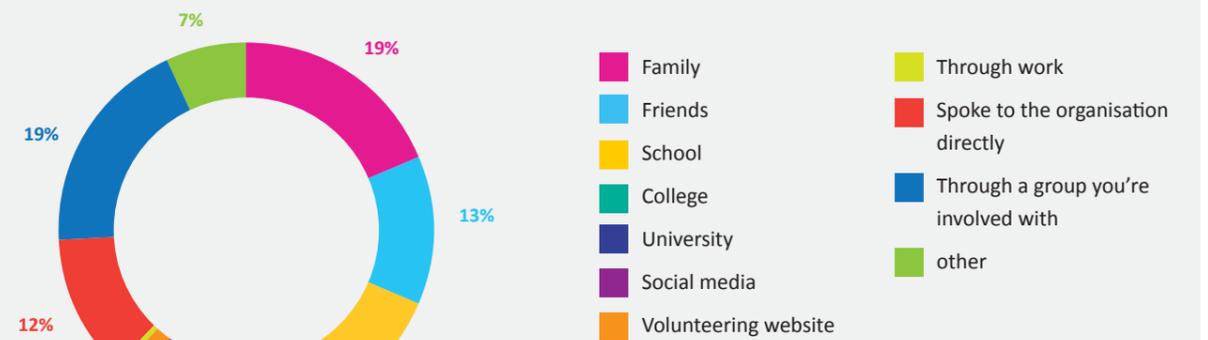
For many young people, the initial steps into volunteering could be better supported, and multiple recommendations propose ways to achieve this. There will always be young people who are able to take the initiative and approach organisations to volunteer, and still others who have family connections which link them to volunteering, or whose first introduction to volunteering is through a youth organisation they were previously a part of. There are many young people, however, who face cultural, financial, digital, and personal barriers in looking for, approaching and securing their first volunteering position. For these young people, hands-on guidance from support workers and opportunities to meet charities and try out roles could make all the difference.

Recommendations

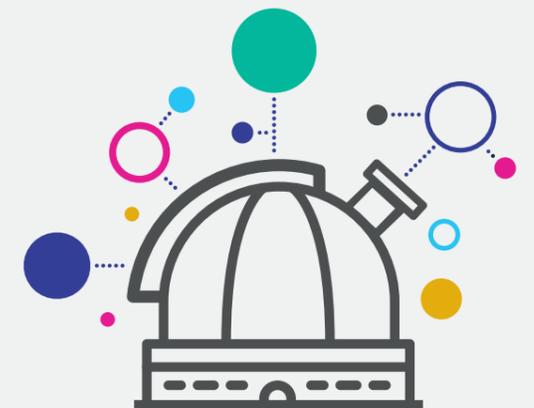
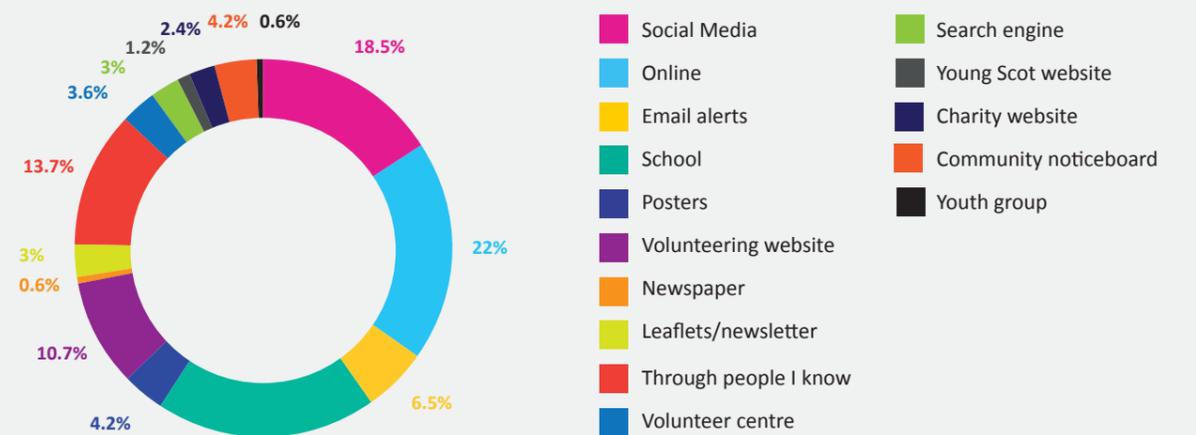
- » Local area volunteering advisory scheme
- » Youth Volunteering Champion schools
- » Roadshows to promote volunteering in local communities
- » Create a framework to support young people not in education, employment or training, to gain work-based skills and personal development through volunteering



Where young people found out about their first volunteering opportunity



Preferred locations for young people to find volunteering opportunities



Accessibility of volunteering

Issues

The accessibility of volunteering covers a wide range of factors that are not necessarily limited to young people but can act as extra barriers for young people, whether real or perceived. Expenses are a problematic area for many young people, with travel to and from an organisation's premises often unaffordable without a charity being able to offer expenses or pre-booked travel, and there are few options for other expenses such as child care. Despite common conceptions of young people as digital natives, there is a problem with access to and navigation of the internet for finding and applying to opportunities, with many young people unable to access the internet easily or consistently, whether due to a lack of digital skills, internet connectivity, or access to devices.

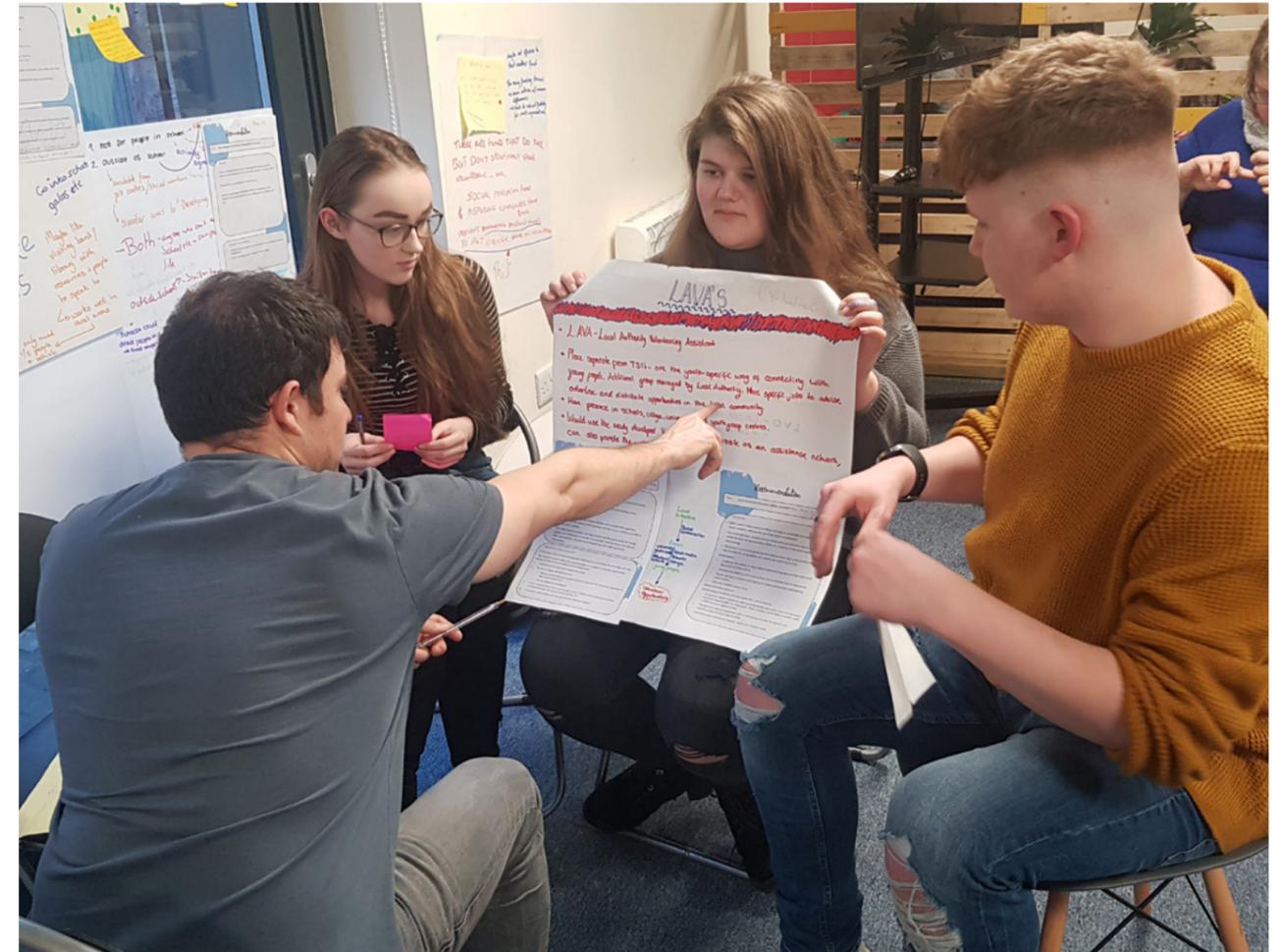
Equality concerns were another aspect of accessibility, with young people being unsure about their ability to gain support for additional needs or accessibility adjustments, for organisations to be flexible with their other commitments or caring responsibilities, and for organisations to be welcoming and respectful of a range of different identities. For some young people, socio-economic background can act as an additional cultural barrier to feeling confident in volunteering spaces. Finally, age discrimination or prejudicial attitudes to young people and their capabilities was something that caused young people concern.

Vision

There are practical barriers which can exist for young people, and others, who wish to volunteer. Some of these barriers can be addressed with financial investment, such as voluntary organisations booking volunteer travel in advance, paying for child care, or adapting the office to support people with a disability. Other barriers can be broken down with cultural changes, such as training staff to support people with additional needs, building flexibility into volunteer schedules so that young people can take time off for exams, and developing structured support for young people who need to build up their skills. Training and guidance for staff on how to make their organisation more inclusive of young people and more diverse will also aid accessibility.

Recommendations

- » Review of quality assurance marks for voluntary organisations
- » Create a framework to support young people not in education, employment or training, to gain work-based skills and personal development through volunteering
- » Access fund for voluntary organisations
- » Develop guidelines on supporting young volunteers
- » Training for voluntary organisations on youth inclusion



Sector approach to volunteering

Issues

A seamless volunteer experience for young people requires a joined-up approach by a range of sectors across Scotland, and benefits from creativity, risk-taking, innovation, the use of new technologies, and the involvement of young people in decision-making. Such an approach would require the cooperation of different organisations and agreement about resource distribution and priorities, something that may take time and continued effort, but which will be beneficial for volunteering in Scotland for people of all ages. By involving young people in decision-making and development, not only will decisions be made with young people in mind, but their contribution will provide fresh perspectives and new challenges to old problems. With the oversight of young people, organisations will benefit from new accountability measures which will push the sector to lead the way in boosting volunteering numbers across the country.

Vision

With a huge number of young people volunteering around the country, it is only right that young people have the opportunity to input into how the volunteering sector develops over the next 10 years and beyond. Young people bring valuable experiences, insight and knowledge to the table and should be given real power to drive innovation and development. By working across sectors and with organisations of all kinds, young people can bring together disparate interests, encourage new ways of thinking, and lead the monitoring and evaluation of new ideas.

Recommendations

- » Local area network meetings
- » Legacy group of young people to oversee implementation of recommendations
- » Annual volunteering summit
- » National forum for businesses and the third sector



Next steps

This report contains a wealth of ideas which the Youth Volunteering Innovation Project team believe can increase the number of young people volunteering across Scotland. Not only that, but many of the ideas here can be applied to the whole population, and have the potential to revolutionise the way that society views volunteering.



To mark the launch of this report, a National Discussion Day for volunteering took place on the 27th March 2019, which brought a range of stakeholders together to hear the YouthVIP's recommendations and provided a forum for reflecting on them. Attendees at the National Discussion Day were asked to work together to think about how the YouthVIP recommendations could be implemented, and were presented with the opportunity to make a pledge for how they could develop youth and adult volunteering in their field or community.

The National Discussion Day was a jumping off point for the implementation stage of the Youth Volunteering Innovation Project, which will see the young people work with ProjectScotland over the following six months to engage a wide variety of people and organisations who have the potential to make the vision set out in this report a reality for every volunteer in Scotland.

The YouthVIP team would like to see their recommendations taken up by a range of stakeholders who are prepared to work together to see their ambitions fulfilled. They are ready to take on the role of championing the recommendations in this report to support the innovation and development of the sector, and invite others to join them in this. Young people are heavily invested in the future of volunteering in Scotland, and are committed to making the third sector a visionary, creative and dynamic force for volunteering promotion and development.

Tribute to Nate

This report is dedicated to the memory of Nate Maxwell. Nate was a valued member of the Youth Volunteering Innovation Project, and the whole team is grateful for all he contributed to the project. We hope that Nate would be proud of this report and the recommendations contained within, and that they reflect his passion for volunteering and for helping others.

Appendices

Appendix A – Young Scot's Co-design Approach

Young Scot has extensive experience in engaging with Scotland's young people to seek their views and input in the development of the services they use. Young people have a significant role to play in encouraging organisations and communities to adopt a more collaborative culture, focusing resources to effectively meet the needs of individuals and communities.

Our co-design service involves young people systematically creating, designing and delivering solutions in collaboration with organisations. Young people are involved much earlier in decision making process through a highly participative approach developing informed insights, ideas, recommendations and solutions for policy and practice. Supporting people to co-design ideas has been shown to have a radical impact on service innovation. We know using a co-design approach enables a more distributed, decentralised approach to innovation that supports Scotland's ambitions to cede power and responsibility directly to young people.

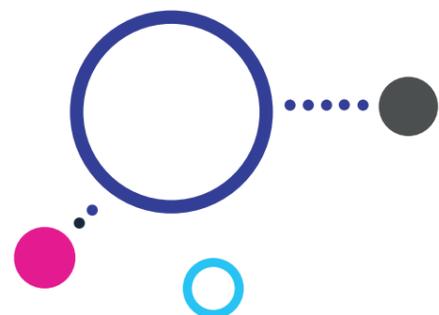
This approach ties into key policy areas including:

- » United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child
- » Public Service Reform/Christie Commission
- » Community Empowerment Act
- » Getting It Right for Every Child



Appendix B – Advisory Board members

- | | |
|---|--|
| Matthew Linning, Volunteer Scotland | Katrina Lambert, YouthVIP |
| Paul Vaughan, Fife Council | Lesley Macdonald, The Robertson Trust |
| David McNeill, Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) | Kirsty Mackenzie, iMultiply |
| Jonathan Gray, Scottish Government | Paul Reddish, ProjectScotland |
| Adrian Martin, Scottish Government | Shannon Goundry, young volunteer |
| Helen Webster, Scottish Government | Paul Gault, Young Scot |
| Bethany Spain, YouthVIP | Alice Wadkins, Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface |
| Caelan Smith, YouthVIP | Linda McNeill, Strive |
| | Paul Okroj, Scottish Volunteering Forum |



Appendix C – National Youth Volunteering survey demographic

Fig 8. Age

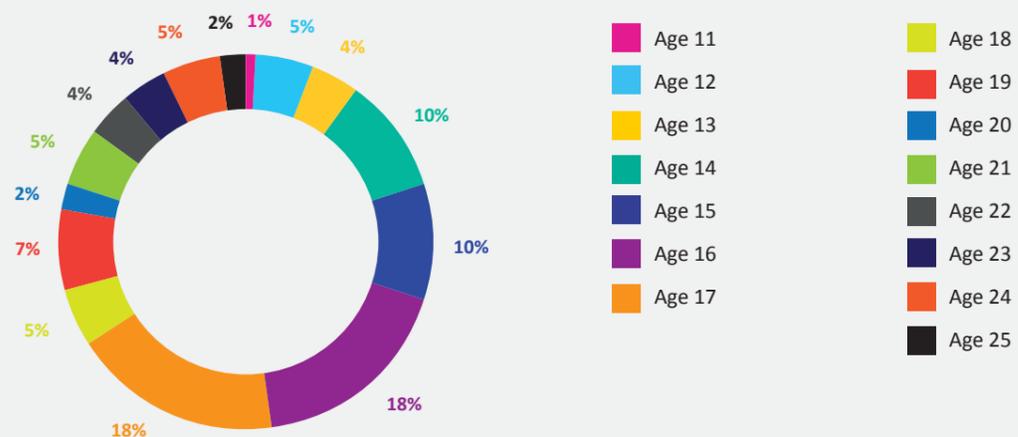


Fig 10. Gender Identity

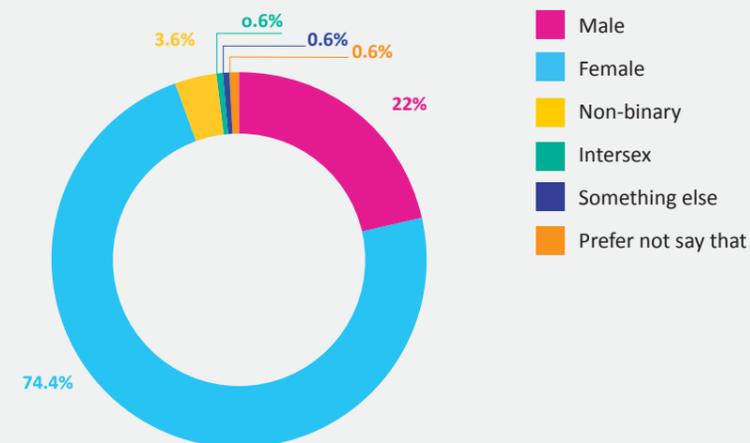


Fig 9. Authority areas of respondents

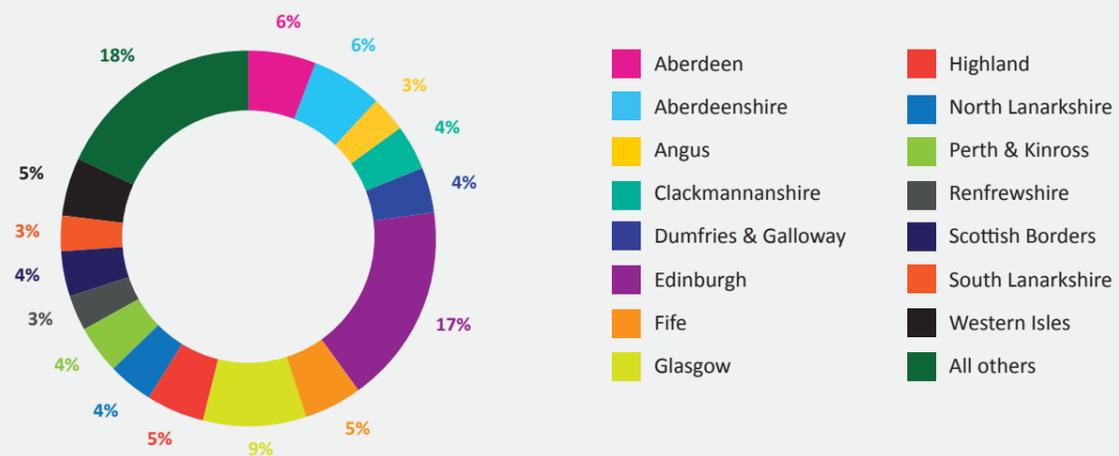
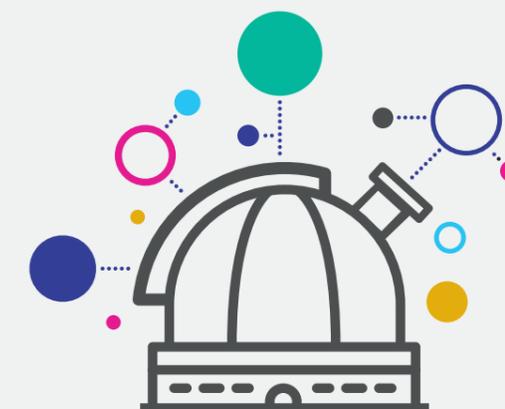
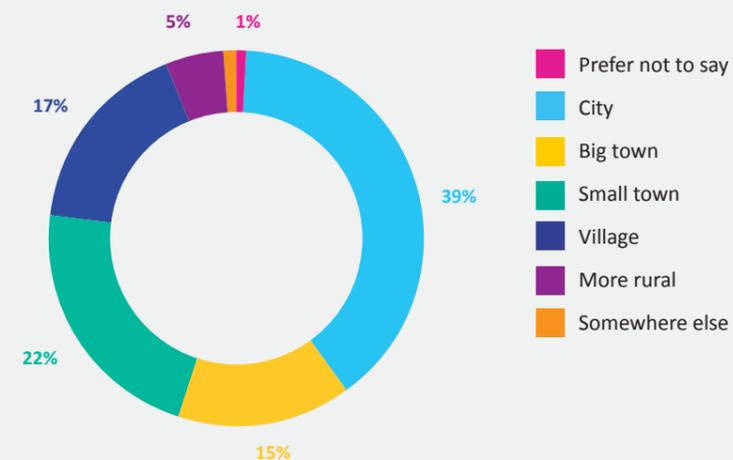


Fig 11. Area lived in



Acknowledgements

The YouthVIP team would like to thank all the individuals and organisations who participated in interviews, provided information and guidance, gave YouthVIP a platform, and helped in the development of their recommendations. Special thanks to:

- » Edinburgh City Council
- » Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland
- » Volunteer Scotland
- » SCVO
- » Volunteer Centre Western Isles
- » Youth Philanthropy Initiative
- » The Wood Foundation
- » Social Bite Ltd
- » Royal Bank of Scotland
- » YouthLink Scotland
- » #iwill
- » Volunteer Glasgow
- » Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS)
- » Awards Network
- » Education Scotland
- » Scottish Volunteering Forum



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