



Vol'Go! GUIDE

Guide for inclusive
volunteering

**3 STEPS
GUIDE**

Contents

- 1. Introduction to the guide, content and how to use it.....3**
- 2. Main results and data from the Vol`Go ! Field Research7**
- 3. Inclusive Volunteer Management 11**
 - Managing a More Inclusive Volunteering programme: A Proposition 12
 - Planning an Inclusive and Impactful Volunteer Programme..... 13
 - Organising an Inclusive Volunteer Programme4
 - How to create volunteer position descriptions for the Inclusive Volunteering Programme?..... 17
 - How to recruit potential volunteers for the Inclusive Volunteering programme?..... 18
 - How to interview potential volunteers for the Inclusive Volunteering programme?..... 20
 - How to prepare volunteers for the Inclusive Volunteering Programme? 22
 - How to monitor volunteers in an Inclusive Volunteering Programme? 24
 - How to evaluate the Inclusive Volunteering Programme? 26
 - How to recognize volunteers and the Inclusive Volunteering Programme? 28
 - From the “+ Inclusive Volunteering” methodology to a new beginning: final thoughts..... 30
- 4. Promoting international inclusive volunteering opportunities 34**
- References 40**
- Attachments..... 42**

1. Introduction to the guide, content and how to use it

Volunteer and Go’ is a project which focuses on voluntary work as a way to reinforce one’s activity, personal development, inclusion and participation in society. It gives an individual the possibility to concretely act for the environment and to get a feeling of self-capability and self-efficacy. Youngsters and young adults with mental health problems or other difficulties are often prone to social exclusion from relevant opportunities, especially within the communities they belong to. This happens with volunteering and, to tackle this, it’s necessary to ensure combined efforts from different social agents. New tools and/or approaches need to be created, in order to be appropriated, not only by the youth, but also by the professionals who work with them. On one hand, young people need more guidance and support to enable their volunteering process. On another hand, youth workers and other relevant professionals need to be

trained on how to support young people during this journey. Through volunteering also influencing the society is possible.

With this idea in mind, Volunteer and Go’ developed this Guide for Inclusive Volunteering, aimed at NGOs professionals on the development of more inclusive volunteering management programs, that they can apply on their non-profit organizations by working with youngsters. As such, its target groups are volunteer managers, youth workers and staff working mainly on NGOs, that could need inclusive programs for the appropriate management of young volunteers, who are facing some form of social exclusion, especially when it comes to mental health issues.

On this Guide, the project team (with Pista Mágica as the coordinator), created a Methodology that volunteer managers/youth workers can use and practice, when trying to draft a more inclusive volunteering



The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



management program. The methodology was based on the experience and contributions of all partners and also on the Field Research done by this project in the first place (Chapter 2). With this, the guide managed to combine different formal and non-formal methodologies together, to give practical tips which ensure an effective self-learning of those using it (Chapter 3). After that, it's also mentioned some aspects that you need to take into consideration when planning international inclusive volunteering opportunities (Chapter 4).

Summing up, this guide has the following chapters:

- 1. Introduction to the guide, content and how to use it**
- 2. Main results and data from the Field Research**
- 3. Inclusive Volunteer Management (proposal of a Methodology & practical strategies)**
- 4. Promoting international inclusive volunteering opportunities**

Through these chapters, and as a volunteer manager/youth worker, this guide will show you how to ensure a tailor-made approach for young people you wish to include as volunteers within your organization, both a local and international level, while taking into account the contextual factors and information that led to its conception. On here, volunteering is approached as a valuable opportunity for both the organization and the youth. Not only it allows young people to develop their social, emotional and practical skills, as it's gives visibility to their potential within community and your role in ensuring it. Organizations as a whole benefit from social inclusion of different target groups and their direct participation on the community, since it allows for social cohesion, efficient and sustainable utilization of resources, economic dynamism and multiculturalism, valued by the European Union's values and necessary to ensure prosperous societies.



2. Main results and data from the Vol`Go! -field research

Volunteerism activities and studies have been intensively implemented across Europe. The long history of volunteerism in European Countries has enabled to development of new methodologies and strategies. Various methods have been introduced and successfully implemented. The institutions and organisations that implement and support these methods have increased day by day. Running successful awareness campaigns helped to increase engagement levels in the volunteer field. Vol`Go Project State-of-Art Report revealed that the term "Inclusive Volunteering" (IV) has not been fully adopted yet. According to the conclusions of the report, inclusive volunteering either doesn't officially exist or is still fresh and developing.

Cyprus:

Inclusive volunteering in Cyprus is not institutionalised separately from the basic principles of volunteering. According to the Declaration of the "Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers of the Republic of Cyprus, "Access to volunteering and active citizenship opportunities is a right, not a privilege.

Everyone has the right to volunteer wherever they choose." For many volunteers in Cyprus, **IV is not something that can be recognized as a different form of Volunteerism.** The philosophy for some is: "if you are a volunteer then you should be ready to accept everyone who is fighting for the same cause."

Finland:

The situation of Inclusive Volunteerism is improving constantly, with articles and activities from NGOs and organizations (like the case of Citizen Forum) focusing on youth volunteerism. People already working in the networks understand the field and also talk about important phenomena of the field together and solve obstacles.

Portugal:

In Portugal, Inclusive volunteering doesn't exist, at least in a formal way. There are some entities and volunteer coordinators that implement it, but it's not a recognized practice at a higher level. Pista Mágica is one of the entities promoting the concept in Portugal since 2019 in a more active way, and they have been trying to create methodologies to do it, col-

lecting good practices and developing projects that promote the inclusive model of volunteering. IV in Portugal has been getting increased recognition as a pathway toward a more committed and responsible volunteer culture. There is still, however, a long way to go, in particular regarding Inclusive Volunteerism, which is still mostly practised in an informal manner by promoting organisations.

Slovenia:

In Slovenia inclusive volunteering is still at an early stage of development, but this does not mean that many organisations do not implement it in their work, planned or unplanned. The research of various materials has shown that inclusive volunteering or its development and promotion is mainly carried out by organisations, institutions, and associations whose predominant target groups are vulnerable and those from the margins - marginalised people (children and adults with special needs, migrants, LGBTQIA+ persons, socially disadvantaged children, and young people, Roma, young people with fewer opportunities).

About Project Result nº 1

Vol'Go Project State-of-the-art Report [AA1] includes various case studies and good practices from 4 different European countries which can be used as a source or guide to develop new methodologies and contribute to the IV development efforts. According to the findings of the report, there are a significant number of organisations and institutions operating in the field of volunteering that are especially active in promoting the mission of volunteerism but it is highly challenging to detect due to the term is still fresh and efforts are not institutionalised or formalised. The field research also revealed that **professionals are struggling to detect who needs inclusive volunteerism and ordinary volunteerism.** To do so the establishment of criteria is necessary.

Volunteer and Go (Vol'Go) Project The State-of-the-Art Report reveals **important training needs and actions to be taken regarding inclusive volunteerism.**

Following Needs revealed by the Vol'Go State of the Art research and analysis:

1-) Definition of Inclusive Volunteerism

The term and exact definition of **Inclusive Volunteerism has to be introduced and distributed more effectively in order to influence and encourage the professionals/volunteers for involvement.** A clear definition will help to understand the general concept of IV and it will lead us to prevent possible confusion about other volunteerism activities.

2-) Establishment distinction between Inclusive Volunteerism and Ordinary/Standard Volunteerism/Social Inclusion

This differentiation needs to be expressed clearly and precisely to foster common understanding and the establishment of communities. Professionals and Volunteers need to be fully aware of the distinction in order to participate properly.

3-) Inclusive Volunteerism determination criteria/ checklist

For the aim of avoiding confusion and uncertainty among youth workers and professionals, a list of **criteria has to be established in terms of determining who may need inclusive volunteerism.** Vol'Go field research shows that it is highly difficult to implement IV without any criteria because confusion occurs while detecting if individuals demand or need Inclusive Volunteerism or any other model of Volunteerism.

4-) Guidelines and Methodologies for Inclusive Volunteerism Implementation

It is necessary to provide detailed guidelines on inclusive volunteering before it can be implemented. It is difficult to talk about the quality of any work done in the field of inclusive volunteering. For this, youth workers and other professionals from other fields of work need some **common guidelines, policies, and working methods to increase quality as much as possible and support the inclusion of young people who have fewer opportunities.**

5-) The lack of human resources

Recruiting inclusive volunteers can be challenging, as the field study conducted by Vol'Go - partners revealed for example in Finland and Portugal. Sometimes it's not easy to get new individuals to participate as volunteers.

6-) Overprotective Families

During the field research of Vol'Go Project, the participants described the **acceptance by the family as a challenge,** taking into account the assignment of new responsibilities (families tend to protect the inclusive volunteers) and the reduction in the time availability of these volunteers. The parents' possible overprotectiveness or worry that their child won't be accepted as how they are, also creates a barrier to involvement.

7-) Investment and Funding

Inclusive Volunteerism should **receive increased support and funding** from related institutions, organisations, corporations, authorities, and stakeholders. To provide people with special needs enough opportunities, donation and support activities should be increased.

8-) Institutionalisation

The process of **establishing consistency and uniformity in the organisation's approach to process implementation** is known as institutionalisation. It is essential for all individuals and groups working in the field to adhere to the same standards. To develop into a highly respected institution with ethics, rules, and legal procedures it is essential to institutionalise.





3. Inclusive Volunteer Management

This chapter is targeted at youth workers with responsibilities related to creating and implementing more inclusive volunteering projects or programmes. If you belong to an organisation which works with volunteers, you can ensure the participation of people that are often excluded from volunteering opportunities, such as young people with disabilities, mental health issues or other reasons for exclusion.

When developing inclusive volunteering activities for these groups, it is important to concentrate on their needs and interests. The programme must be interesting, accessible, and attractive for the marginalised youth. Making the threshold for the youth participating inclusive volunteerism as low as possible

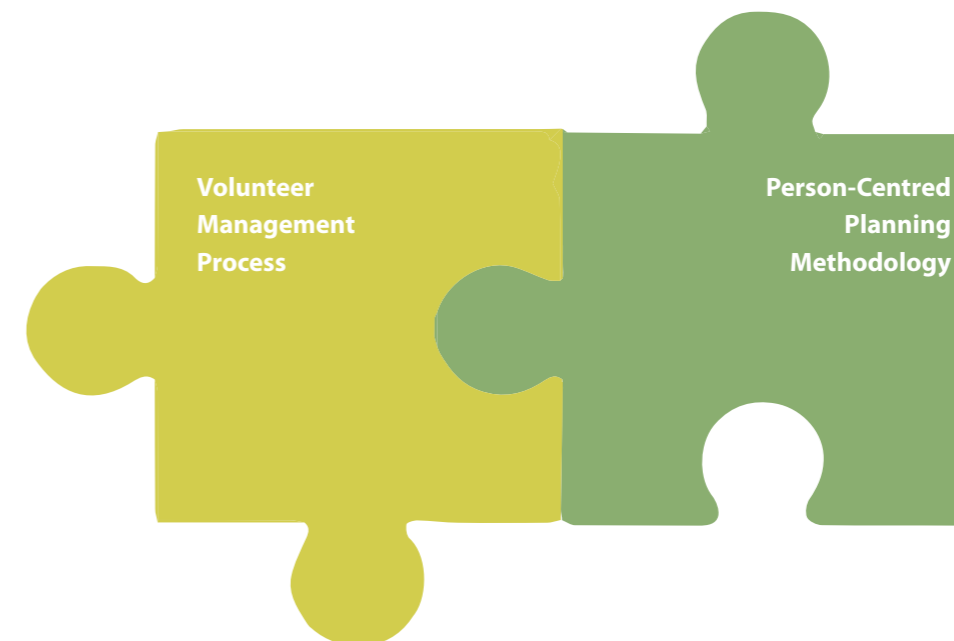
expands their circle of life in many ways. Inclusive volunteering creates meaningful life content, communities to belong to, and increases one's well-being and capacity building.

So – how to arouse the motivation in marginalised youth then? And what are the concrete steps to implement an inclusive volunteering programme for them?

To achieve this, the entirety of the volunteering management's process must be inclusive and this is the basis of Pista Mágica's methodological proposition, called "+ Inclusive Volunteering".

This proposition is based on the intersection of two approaches:

Figure 1 - Two approaches, one proposition



1. Steve McCurley and Rick Lynch's process of Volunteer Management - briefly described in the Handbook of Support for Volunteer Management ("Manual de Apoio na Gestão de Voluntariado", 2016) and extensively described on the Complete Volunteer Management Handbook ("Manual Completo de Gestão de Voluntariado", 2019).
2. The Person-Centred Planning methodology - widespread in Portugal from through ASSOL's (Social Solidarity Association of Lafões) handbooks:
 - "Toda a minha vida é um Círculo" (All my life's a Circle), edited by ASSOL in 2011, written by Jack Pearpoint and others, Inclusion Press edition, Toronto, Canada;
 - "PATH: Um caminho para futuros alternativos e com esperança" (PATH An Innovative Approach to Fostering Hopeful Thinking), edited by ASSOL in 2001 written by Jack Pearpoint and others, Inclusion Press edition, Toronto, Canada;
 - "Apoios Centrados na Pessoa" (People-Centred Support), edited by ASSOL in 2014, written by Mário Pereira.

Managing a More Inclusive Volunteering programme: A Proposition

For inclusive volunteering programmes and projects to have a positive impact on all parties involved, it is important to guarantee that the organisations that are promoting these opportunities are competent and possess basic volunteering management tools.

As a result, our proposition for an inclusive volunteering programme management is based on the combination **between the Volunteering Management process and the Person-Centred Planning methodology**, as mentioned above.

- (1) Planning
- (2) Organisation
- (3) Volunteer position descriptions
- (4) Recruitment
- (5) Interview and Matching
- (6) Preparation
- (7) Supervision and Monitoring
- (8) Evaluation
- (9) Recognition

When it comes to a more inclusive volunteering management, we think that these 9 steps (McCurley & Lynch, 2011) are the most effective. They give you a set of minimum requirements which are needed to implement a successful volunteering programme. However, since they are of generalist tenor, they are not enough to ensure the inclusiveness of your volunteering programme. Because of this, we suggest that you let these steps be influenced by the **Person-Centred Planning methodology**. This methodology focuses on the individualities of each person and tries to ensure their success in the pursuit of a certain path. Since volunteering opens a space for people to find more opportunities to grow, test different things, form new relationships, develop skills and acquire knowledge, we believe that it is compatible with this methodology.

Put this, and to progress with our explanation, we will now present some notes that you must keep in mind in each of the **9 Volunteering Management steps**, so you can effectively **manage a more inclusive volunteering programme** while considering the Person-Centred Planning methodology tools.

Planning an Inclusive and Impactful Volunteer Programme

To achieve a volunteer programme which generates major impact, you need to be aware of how volunteering can contribute to your organisation's purpose. The first step here would be to consider the resources which are necessary to satisfy your organisation's main goals and understand if volunteering could take place. If you confirm this, then you would need to highlight it and explain how volunteers can have a positive role in the achievement of the organisation's mission to everyone involved.

Practical tip

This is a phase for thinking and brainstorming, so make sure to make use of many different tools to potentiate this.

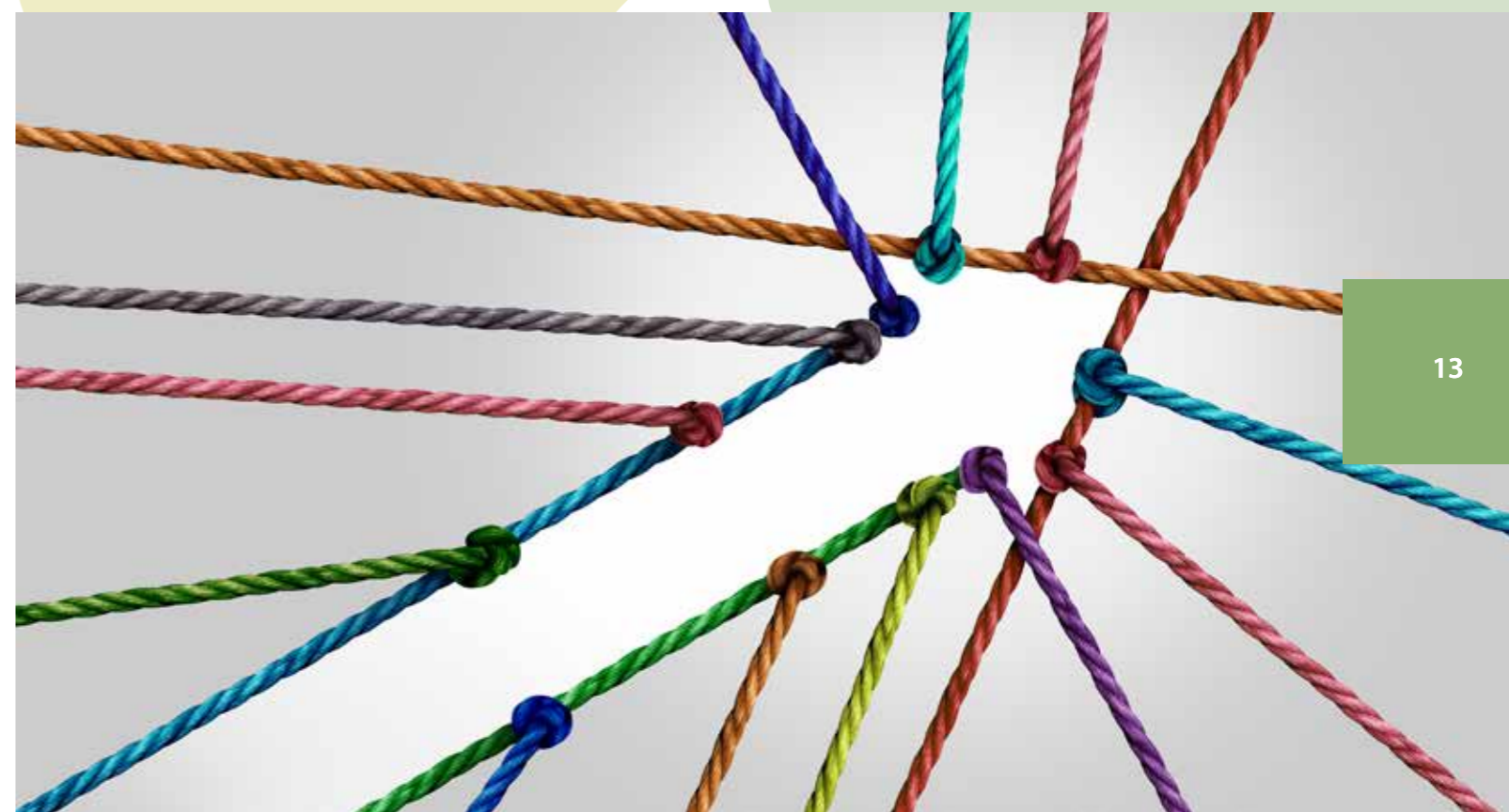
Once you discuss it, you can start thinking about how to make the whole process more inclusive. Therefore, you should consider:

- Does creating a socially accessible volunteering programme match with your entity's goals?
- How does it align with what you want to achieve?
- How does it satisfy the needs of the people you are helping?

Besides this, we suggest you to follow Martinelli's (1999) strategic planning method for non-profit organisations and reflect upon the following questions:

- What obstacles does/will your entity face while implementing an Inclusive Volunteering Programme?
- Which internal and external resources are necessary?
- Who can help you overcome those obstacles and how?
- How will you involve those external people/entities in your strategy?
- What will be the role of those people/entities? What can we ask from them? What can we offer?

Practical exercise



Organising an Inclusive Volunteer Programme

After planning, you can start thinking about organising your inclusive volunteer programme. Doing this is a complex task, so your organisation should ensure that your volunteer programme has a good structure and is effective. It is important to guaran-

tee that everybody is involved and that they understand the value of having volunteers to achieve the organisation's mission.

This is a must because you can only create a **well-conceived programme** once you have defined the reason why you want to include volunteers. There must be an organisational agreement around this subject, so you do not have problems in the long run.

Once this is done, you need to **define formal rules and procedures on inclusive volunteering management**, which will be reflected, for example, in the organisation's volunteers' handbook and in daily volunteer management tools.

Practical exercise

Besides, it is important to see if you have the necessary conditions to take in young volunteers from marginalised groups who may have particular needs. Here, we give you some examples:

- Do you have the physical conditions (facility-wise) to accommodate, for example, young people with a disability or reduced mobility?

- Do you have enough volunteers to coordinate volunteers with bigger monitoring needs, or will the employees do it? If you choose the second option, are the employees willing to do it? Do they have training to take on this responsibility? If you decide to recruit volunteers to coordinate other volunteers, what is the desired profile?

To deepen this process, Pereira (2014, pp.95-96) illustrates many examples of **forms of support which can be necessary for the volunteers' participation**:

- **Physical environment:** modifications to the spaces in which the person does volunteer work. For example, if you are integrating a volunteer in a wheelchair, you must make sure the space is fully accessible;
- **Personal and financial resources:** if the person faces some kind of economic difficulty, for example, the reimbursement of expenses arising from volunteer work can be crucial. Providing lunch to a volunteer that has more than half a day in his/her position can be crucial to his/her integration and retention;
- **Transport:** it may be necessary to provide support in finding/guaranteeing accessible means, whether it be public or private services. It can be that some of the people in more vulnerable situations have some autonomy challenges that can

translate into not feeling capable of using public transportation;

- **Time management:** volunteer action is carried out in free time and demands responsibility, commitment, punctuality and time management skills, which implies that it may be necessary to provide strategies in these areas to volunteers. You must keep in mind that, in some cases, it is better to start with a smaller amount of volunteering hours and access through time if the person is willing to take in more;
- **Specialised support:** depending on the person's specific needs, extra support may be necessary for the volunteering tasks. People that suffer from anxiety, for example, might need a closer mentoring from someone that is more familiar to her/him, such as the person who has interviewed and prepared her/him for the position;
- **Support in the community:** the person may need to be accompanied in order to participate in specific events or activities.

However, it will be hard to think of these if you know very little about marginalised young people's realities. As such, and in order to answer these questions, you have to consider the

needs of marginalised youth with different challenges in life. You need to get orientation and target group awareness from professionals, just like **SOSPED**, one of the partners for this project, does.

Practical tip

SOSPED is an entity in Finland who works with the concept of **Culture House model** in order to promote social inclusion. They believe that the feeling of belonging to a group or a community is a very important basic need, and a communal meeting place for young volunteers is a good way to create a platform for peer and volunteering community. In many instances, they have dealt with young people in situations of social vulnerability and have delimited some good practices, which may be useful to improve your target group knowledge. In consequence of this, you must:

- Get information about various functional challenges and phenomena, and understand if you can apply them in practical forms of support.
- Map out what kind of need for activities your target group has and what do you need to implement them.
- Set up quality criteria, an equality plan and clear goals for the activities. Make follow-up and evaluation of the effectiveness of the inclusive volunteerism actions to justify needs for funding.
- Involve and include young people from the target group already in the planning process of the activities – who would know their needs and wishes better than the youth themselves?

By following these steps, you will understand which **conditions you need to guarantee to ensure young people's participation, your main obstacles and which partners/entities you can mobilise** to create and sustain your inclusive volunteer programme.

SOSPED, for example, always tries to ensure that their communal places are physically accessible and close to public transportation. They create the community place together with the participants to boost the experience of ownership of the space. For them, communal meeting places should be a safe and inspiring environment for every participant regardless of their starting point. Coffee and tea and a homelike environment seem to support the feeling of communality. Being free of charge and providing tools and space for creativity and activities is important too. Experts by experience and peers remind that nobody is alone with their challenges (The meeting place can also be built as a pop up -activity in connection with an event, shopping mall e.g., that is one way to concretely bring the activities there where the young people are instead of expecting the youth to find you.) They try to create the operating methods and safer space guidelines together with young participants.

Example of a good practise

Create the community place together with the participants to boost their experience of ownership of the space.

After taking those into account and **ensuring you have solutions for them**, just like SOSPED does, you will have to consider and develop the following elements:

- Orientation's Strategy for volunteers (in written form);
- The budget meant for the management programme;

- Training of the staff in inclusive volunteering management and the use of Person-Centred Planning methodology (or other relevant ones);
- Volunteer position descriptions (in written form);
- The volunteer's minimum commitment time;
- Definition of the volunteers' recruitment strategies, among others.

Practical exercise

Lastly, and to confirm that you are ready to pass to the next phase, you must assess the plan for the volunteers' involvement and have answers for the following list:

- Do the human resources who will work with each volunteer understand their roles?
- Are there volunteer position descriptions written?
- Do volunteer position descriptions clearly identify the qualifications for the role and indicate its purpose and nature?

- Have you identified a good working atmosphere for volunteers, in terms of the workspace, equipment, accessibility, among others?
- Do you have a plan to recruit volunteers for existing positions?
- Do you have a plan to prepare and guide volunteers according to their characteristics?
- Which procedures should you implement to ensure that your volunteering programme is truly inclusive?

How to create volunteer position descriptions for the Inclusive Volunteering Programme?

However, do not forget to take your future volunteers' own perspectives into consideration, as you need to be **open and flexible** when writing down these volunteer position descriptions. If you follow our indications during the **organising phase**, you will be aware of the needs of the people you wish to recruit and you will have contacted them in some way. That means you will have the knowledge needed to modify these roles in order to respect your future volunteer's needs too.

Practical tip

As a result, never forget to consider your workers' and volunteers' wishes and expectations when adjusting these positions, so you can decrease the volunteers' turnover and dropout rate. To achieve this, you will have to work on communication channels which allow feedback to be given and received, be it through periodic meetings or written communications.

In this phase, many other things can be discussed: specific skills that are needed; the ideal commitment time; attitudes or other qualities which represent what the organisation looks for in a volunteer; and the conception of volunteer position descriptions based on the results.

In addition to the four main principles which should be considered during the elaboration of a volunteer position description – a sense of belonging, authority to think, responsibility for the results and the ability to evaluate or measure what is achieved (McCurley & Lynch, 2011) –, it must also contain elements such as a title (function designation), purpose, indicators, requirements, schedule, place, supervision and benefits. In the attachments part of this chapter (pages 42-46), you will find an example of a volunteer position description that you can use to create your own.

A possible strategy to make the volunteering programme more inclusive is to analyse the volunteer position descriptions that you already have, and analyse what conditions are essential to successfully carry out the role. Maybe the position can be carried out by someone in a situation of vulnerability or social exclusion, if the person meets the requirements. You will also find a volunteer profile (pages 42-46), which can help you make a match between a profile and a volunteering position description.

Like we mentioned in the planning part, it is important to involve the **interested parties** in the process of creating potential volunteer positions. You can do this by asking staff members about the best way to involve volunteers and planning volunteer tasks which consider your **organisation's mission**.

Practical exercise

To make this process easier, you should ask your workers the following questions, initially thought by Ivan Scheier (cit in McCurley & Lynch, 1996) and developed by McCurley & Lynch (2011):

- Which parts of your job do you really like doing?
- Which parts of your job do you dislike doing?
- What other things have you always wanted to do, but never had time, availability, or opportunity to?
- What other tasks, activities or projects would you like to see done that no one in the entity has the skills to carry out? Or that the entity can not pay for?

The answers to these questions can create the basis for the definition of the volunteer position descriptions. This is an ongoing process, as you should update these positions often and make sure they are compatible with your organisation's growth.



How to recruit potential volunteers for the Inclusive Volunteering programme?

At this stage, it is essential to choose the form of recruitment which will work best for your organisation. Recruitment must be seen as a way to **combine two types of needs – the volunteers' and your organisation's** –, which then materialise into the effort of finding volunteers whose needs match with what your organisation wants and needs, that is, whose motivational needs and skills can be combined with the volunteer position descriptions that the organisation is offering.

Therefore, the recruitment process can be seen as a filter, through which you can identify, in a universe of potential volunteers (all the population in their com-

munity, **without forgetting the people in a situation of social exclusion**), the people that best meet the needs of your organisation.

If you're looking for volunteers and if the role is designed to be carried out by someone in a situation of social exclusion, **make sure that you publicise that opportunity to entities that work with that segment of population or in public places where that population usually goes to**, for example. You can also look for the support of the Volunteer Centre in the Municipality where you work (if there is one) or post those opportunities in other Volunteering Centres or Platforms.

It's also important to make clear that your volunteering opportunities are inclusive in the materials which are created for the recruitment. One way to achieve this is to use images of people with different characteristics in your advertisement, at all times. For example, if you think a certain volunteer position can be taken by a person with a physical disability, you should use images to make that clear. Another aspect that you need to consider is how people will apply to your volunteer positions. Many entities use online forms, but that might not be enough. You may speak with entities which work with these segments of population to understand their opinion on this and act accordingly.

In order to understand how you can apply this to young people in vulnerable situations, you may need to read the following practical example, from SOSPED:

- Going to the youth, it is more likely to reach their interest like that than by waiting for them in the office. Go to public places young people like to visit and advertise and communicate on platforms they also operate on. Cooperate with schools or other educational institutions. Support staff, therapists or nurses and social workers working with young people are also a good way to reach marginalised young people.
- With young people who are socially isolated and struggling with social problems, the importance of internet advertising and the employee's knowledge of using social media and different servers is emphasised, because marginalised

young people do not usually leave their homes to apply for voluntary work on their own initiative.

- Open the concepts of accessibility and inclusiveness and emphasise that everyone has something to give to others. Tell about inclusive volunteering opportunities for youth. Consider equality and accessibility (inclusivity) thinking already in the planning phase. That is, for example, splitting and reshaping volunteer tasks. There are people who seek communality, and on the other hand some dislike the idea of being committed to an NGO or other entity organising volunteering possibilities for a longer time. Especially for young people it can be a relieving thought, that there are also one-time tasks and pop-up volunteering activities.

Practical tip

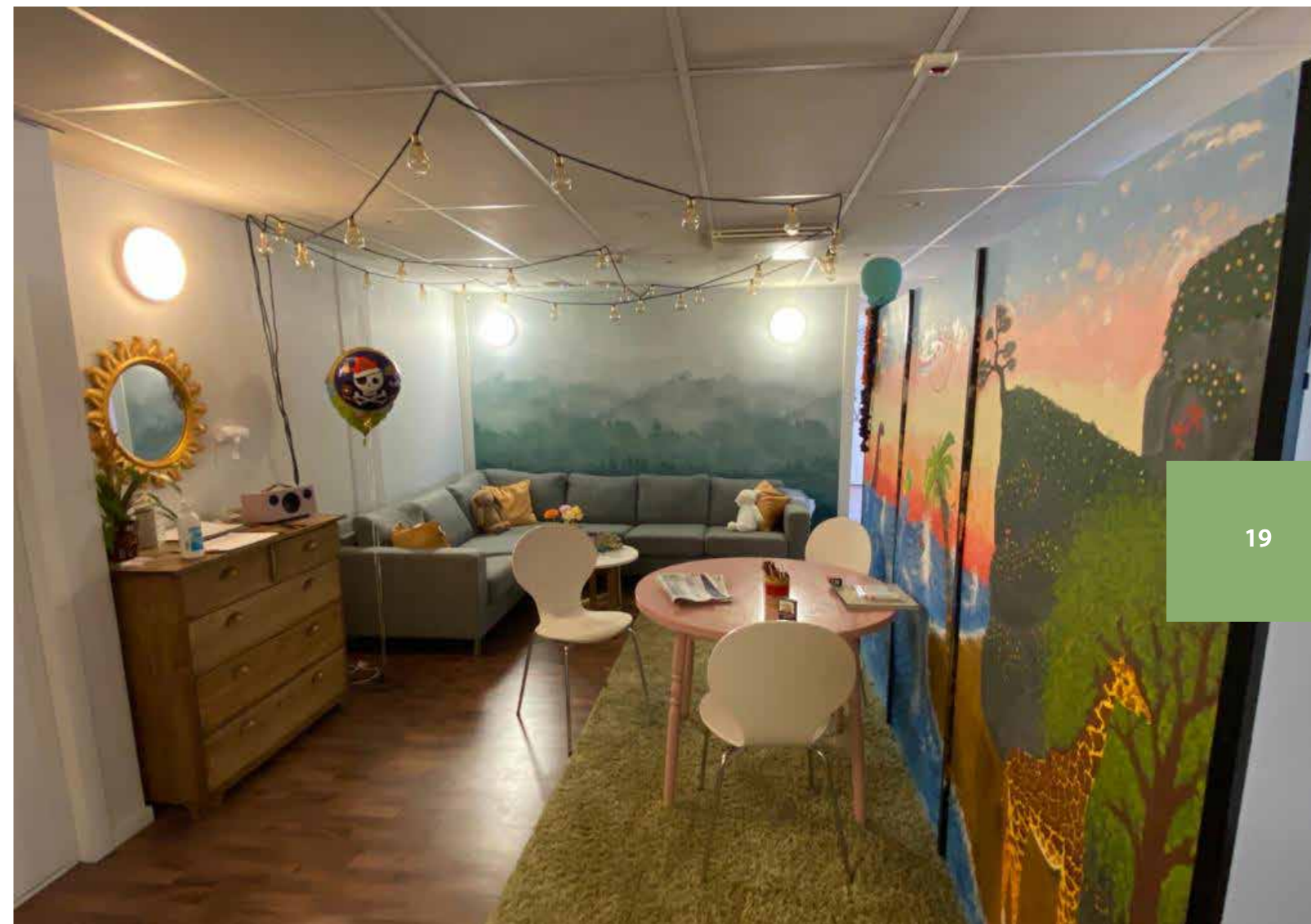
Finally, and once you have figured this out, you can start thinking about the interviewing process.

Open the concepts of accessibility and inclusiveness and emphasise that everyone has something to give to others.

Practical exercise

Answer to the following questions in order to prepare your recruitment campaign:

- What is the volunteer position title?
- What is the main message and information to be disclosed in the recruitment action?
- What is the target audience?
- What is the recruitment start date and deadline?
- Which recruitment types and strategies are you going to use?
- What are the key entities and contact persons to reach out? How will you contact/communicate with them?
- What communication materials are we going to use? When should they be ready to use?



How to interview potential volunteers for the Inclusive Volunteering programme?

This interview process allows you to understand how the organisation's needs and the volunteers' motivations and qualifications match. However, you must be careful not to treat this process the same way you would with a job interview. Interviewing volunteers is not about examining a candidate's aptitude for a position, but rather evaluating the ability and willingness of a candidate to adjust productively to a position within the institution.

As such, you must also consider your own organisation's flexibility and how you can turn the volunteering into a positive experience for both parties. For this reason, the interviewing process is also an important moment to do an initial analysis of the person's ambitions and expectations, what they like and do not like, their story, their strengths, and talents, etc. Of course, this is just an initial contact and there will be more opportunities to deepen this affirmation during the following stages of Preparation and Monitoring, but you can start introducing **the Person-Centred Planning methodology** at this stage. If the person being interviewed belongs to a more vulnerable social group or demonstrates need for monitoring or more specific and individual preparation, you can use the interview to mention that your entity provides specific support processes to volunteers and in what terms. You can even use the moment of the interview to showcase this. For example, if the interviewee needs someone's aid to act as a translator or a sign language interpreter, you can activate the necessary tools which you already have within your organisation.

In some situations, however, you will find that certain people, due to their situation of vulnerability, have a harder time picturing themselves in such a way, especially if they were never stimulated to think of that before. Many have a strong feeling of being an outsider and not belonging to any community or even the society. They might have learning disabilities or other disabilities, mental health problems, lack of self-esteem, language skills or social skills etc., and they don't feel applied by volunteering activities. Because of this, you can try to collect this information later and provide customised accompaniment in that sense. You can allow the person to explore more about themselves and have many different experiences, so they work on their own ambitions and choose the specific paths which they wish to explore.

Practical tip

In Pista Mágica's experience, it has often happened that people in more vulnerable situations need time to get comfortable with those leading the process of helping define the person's happiness project in order to actually explore and identify their interests, talents and obstacles, for example. One of our volunteers in the project VolunTalento, for instance, had identified, from the start, handicrafts as their main interest, because they knew that was something they were already good at. However, with time, realising that volunteering is a space to grow other talents and interests, they started sharing that they would like to do something completely different: volunteering with farm animals.

Gather a group of volunteers or coworkers and do a role play on the Interview Process. Do it as many times as needed so everyone can have the chance to be the interviewer, the interviewee and the observer. Share feedback and see what you already do well and what needs improvement.

Practical exercise

Interviewing volunteers is not about examining a candidate's aptitude for a position, but rather evaluating the ability and willingness of a candidate to adjust to a position.



How to prepare volunteers for the Inclusive Volunteering Programme?

To prepare your potential young volunteers, you need to take in consideration what McCurley & Lynch (2011) wrote. According to them, the preparation includes five elements, namely **orientation, training, coaching, counselling, and mentoring.**

Here, you must give full power to the person to decide. You need to respect their wishes and their self-determination, while also reassuring your ethical duty to ensure their safety. In other words, this is a process of negotiation, and you will need to un-

derstand the available resources within your line of action. It can also be relevant to listen not only to the person, but also to other key members which can have an active part in their plan's success (family, friends, workers from certain entities, etc.).

Practical tip

When it comes to **orientation and training**, you can do just as SOSPED suggests:

- Always organise a training and orientation course for new volunteers. When organising inclusive volunteering training, make sure there is enough time for each gathering. When training, speak calmly and in clear language. Leave time for questions.
- In the first training session tell the young volunteers about your NGO and /or other background community and frameworks of the operating model. Open the concepts and principles of volunteerism. Tell the young volunteers what is expected from them, and what they gain in return. Set joint and individual goals to reach.
- Next training meetings should be planned in the frame of references of your own activity. If the volunteers act as group leaders, teach the trainees principles of group leading, or if your activities are around a certain theme, open it up.

Understand and open up the role of volunteers in your community. Don't cover too many topics in one training session, and combine theory and exercises.

- Remember that the target group has challenges in different areas of life, so make sure that everyone knows that participation in exercises is not obligatory. Also, the concentration ability of different participants varies, so take enough breaks and repeat and summarise themes you've already gone through from time to time. Interesting themes to go through in the training are for example:
 - Interaction skills;
 - Recognizing individual values;
 - Identifying one's own skills and assets related to volunteer work;
 - Concrete planning of voluntary activities (themes, duration, content goals etc);

As such, you can look at SOSPED's example here, who often work with young people at risk of social exclusion. They believe that you need to hear young people at all times and respect them, which is why you must follow these steps:

- Highlight the meaning of volunteerism as civic action. People usually need to feel that their actions make a difference and that they lead a meaningful life. This applies especially to young people who are otherwise excluded from communities. Volunteering is a great way to influence the environment and society. Capacity building through volunteering also improves one's ability to function in other areas of life.
- Give attention to the participants' experiences. Many marginalised young people suffer from the feeling of not being heard in the system or being bullied because of mental health issues or disabilities. Some have illnesses, some have immigrant backgrounds, there are different traumas and

other difficult life experiences. That is why safe space guidelines and community rules created with participants are recommended when structuring inclusive volunteerism. Everyone should have the right to participate in their own way and feel safe.

- Help the youngsters find new perspectives. At the same time, always be open to new perspectives. Ask what would be of interest to them, offer options and give space to answer, listen. Be respectful, don't assume things about participants feelings or needs. Be present and available but let the volunteers as individuals decide what is the best task for them. Hear ideas, encourage, and if needed, help to shape the realisation of the ideas to volunteer activities. Make sure that orientation and support for the voluntary tasks are available in different forms and throughout the duration of the task. Introduction and the role of the professional in the program are important, but the people volunteering should be in focus.

Example of a good practise

Along with this, you need to focus on coaching, counselling, and mentoring of the volunteers. This is a key-moment in the Inclusive Volunteering Programme's implementation and you can plan Person-Centred Support sessions with volunteers who need it, as it is the case with people at risk of social exclusion. You can find an example of one of these plans from one of our projects in the attachments (pages 42-46). The first sessions (at least, two) should focus on the creation of a plan (see Attachment 3) which allows you to understand the volunteers'

goals and how volunteering work can support them in achieving those goals.

According to Pereira (2014), it is important to obtain the following answers:

- What are the goals which need to be achieved to get us closer to the desired future?
- Which steps does each one of those goals entail?
- Who can help the person achieve those goals?

Example of a good practise

After this, you will execute the plan, side by side with the person and the support network they have chosen. Be aware that this plan needs to utilise volunteering as a tool for development, growth and achievement. What you want to do here is to help the person reach their objectives. Many times you will find, for

example, people aiming to conquer more autonomy in their lives or who have goals which imply that. Volunteering can be a way to train certain habits which contribute to that overall process; in this case, something like using public transport can be an important step for some people, among others.

Example of a good practise

How to monitor volunteers in an Inclusive Volunteering Programme?

Volunteering managers need management skills for the following reasons:

- They might need to directly supervise volunteers;
- They should make sure that others do a good job of managing volunteers.

To be successful in managing people, a volunteering manager's job is **to make sure that people want and can do the tasks they have been assigned, by taking their needs and skills into account.**

In this sense, it is equally important that the volunteer is also in control over what they are going to do. With this, you will make your volunteers more autonomous and capable of acting independently to accomplish better results. In this kind of relationship, **the volunteer manager becomes a supporting source to the volunteer, not a managing one.**

Practical tip

This means you will need to have efficient communication plans with your volunteers, and you can take SOSPED's indications here:

- Organise regular peer meetings for young volunteers and emphasise that between the meetings you can always be reached even for the smallest questions. In addition to support in the planning phase, offer concrete support when the volunteer goes to do their task, go with them if necessary. A more experienced volunteer can also support a new volunteer during the activities.
- After the young volunteer finishes the task, provide an opportunity for a debriefing and mentoring discussion. Create also own communication channels for volunteers, such as closed and private social media channels, where they can have peer-to-peer discussions with each other. Voluntary work guidance and counselling for the volunteer community by an external professional a few times a year is recommended. Remember to

thank the volunteers every time for giving their time to others and enabling the continuity of your volunteer program through their own activity.

- In between meetings, keep in contact with young volunteers with social media apps, emails, messages, phone calls, etc. When meeting face to face, always offer time for reflection discussions to ensure that no young volunteer is feeling alone or overloaded with their duties, and that everyone has a possibility to reflect their feelings (both good and bad) after volunteering. Volunteering can be a significant learning process about one's own skills and limits. Reflecting on the feelings afterwards also provides tools that are usable in other communities and parts of life.
- Use plain language, recognize the means of communication of your target group and explain why and how everything is done. Use visualisation and remember picture cards and/or communication interpreters to help interaction if needed.

Another thing you must consider is that the monitoring phase is particularly important for the execution of the majority of the Person-Centred Plan. Here, and according to Pereira (2014), you need to question if:

- Is the plan working?
- Is progress being made and are we moving towards the desired direction?
- Are changes to the plan needed?

Practical exercise

For the plan to be truly effective, and based on Pereira (2014, p.95), you should:

- Identify the necessary support and services to guarantee the plan's success;
- Identify who is responsible for ensuring each predicted support;
- Set deadlines so the goals are achieved;
- Ensure that the plan doesn't take the person away from other types of support already assured by their network of people;
- Ensure the plan runs smoothly and is able to change the way some support and services lines work, according to the results being achieved and the changes people wish for.

Because of these, you might have to apply many changes according to the person's needs. Sometimes, volunteering will need to be adapted in terms of duration and tasks, since you might not take some aspects into consideration during the planning process. For example, a volunteer might choose a certain schedule and duration according to the entity's necessities and then notice that it does not match with their own personal needs. In Pista Mágica, we see this situation very often on the projects we lead. Once, one of the volunteers started to do autonomous volunteering work on a farm and noticed that the tasks and the duration itself were too demanding, given their physical constraints. They felt that such a situation was not sustainable in the long term and shared with the team that, although they did enjoy the work, the duration was not compatible with their capacity. Because of this, we had to adjust and speak with the entity, in order to update their volunteer position description and reduce the duration of the volunteering itself.

Here, you can also listen to SOSPED's good practices, who mention that, when you work with marginalised young people, you must:

- Remember you are an enabler of activities, not the main performer in the volunteering process. Learn to tolerate incompleteness or the fact that you yourself would maybe carry out the activity in a different way than the young people planning the volunteering program. Be curious to learn from them. Treasure diversity. Help shape tasks individually, be clear about your expectations, and always be open and available for questions and dialogue. Show appreciation.
- Give room for individuality and different personalities. Everyone's needs are different, and the program should have room for creativity and different levels of challenges, so that the forms of participation can be defined individually and according to the young person's resources and endurance. Remind the young volunteers that they can also take a break from activities if their life situation changes, or if they need to rest. Don't demand actions but support activity.
- In inclusive volunteerism activities where two participants meet somewhere other than in the communal meeting place and without the presence of the professional, it is recommended that communication takes place through employees of the organisation. It ensures that the meetings related to the volunteering program are always arranged to fit the calendars of both parties, and that the support relationship doesn't become too continuous and burdensome for the volunteer. The employee arranges the meetings and takes care of communication related to volunteering tasks.

Practical tip

How to evaluate the Inclusive Volunteering Programme?

Volunteering managers don't always foresee the evaluation of volunteers enthusiastically. However, this step should not be avoided, given that:

- Most of the volunteers want to do their best, so, the lack of feedback and support can be disconcerting and reveal carelessness regarding them and the quality of the work they do.
- Most of the volunteers will win in evaluation situations.

By ignoring this step, the organisation's volunteers will detach themselves from your organisation and not have a real notion of their impact. This can not happen, since you need to understand if the person completed the tasks efficiently, if they felt good about it and if it contributed positively to their personal growth.

In inclusive volunteering, this moment is **particularly important for the revision of the Person-Centred Plan**. As Pereira (2014) demonstrates, you need to schedule sessions to speak with the volunteers and make revisions of the plan. In these evaluation sessions, you should keep in mind the **indicators that were defined for the person's tasks, but also the "effectiveness of the support" in reaching the "desired results"** (Pereira, 2014, pp.87-88). Keeping in mind the abilities and defined goals of each person, being realistic and adapting to the individual in question is crucial for the evaluation process. People are all different and always have a lot to offer if their individuality is respected. When we respect that diversity and celebrate it, we allow people to have experiences which make them comfortable and happy.

In Pista Mágica, and within the projects we lead, we often see situations where the volunteers prefer certain tasks over others, given their overall personality and other conditions they might have. For example,

one of our project's volunteers deals with social anxiety, but loves animals. As a result, they started to volunteer on a kennel and were given tasks which do not involve much human interaction. However, given that the work still implied changes in her usual routine, it still caused her great anxiety and even led to a panic attack. In these situations, you will need to act quickly and give them space. Most of all, you will need to hear what the person has to say and help them understand what triggered them. Remember their Person-Centred Plan and review it with them, try to understand if it still makes sense for them and which adjustments you must make in order for them to achieve what they wish for, within a frame of action that is comfortable for them. In this case, our volunteer started to be accompanied by us and it had a great impact on how well they felt overall. It was easier for her to deal with their social anxiety when in the presence of someone who they knew well.

Another thing that you need to consider is the importance of the person being engaged in other community activities that go beyond the accompaniment you are doing with them. As such, you need to listen to SOSPED's suggestions, especially with young people, who say:

- Inform the young volunteers also about other participation possibilities in your society and encourage them to take part in other activities as well. Go with them if they feel insecure. Help create equality and inclusivity by blurring the differences and dividing lines.

Now we present some examples of evaluation measures, stated in Pereira (2014, p.88):

- Did the person develop new relationships?
- Did the person gain new skills?
- Was the person able to participate effectively in the community, while carrying out significant and useful activities?
- Did changes occur to their status in the community (the person has become more respected, can express their gifts and talents)?
- Was the person able to make significant choices and express their identity?

Practical tip



How to recognize volunteers and the Inclusive Volunteering Programme?

Keeping your volunteers around is an important step for your organisation's volunteering practices' success. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that volunteers get their **motivational compensation and a show of appreciation in response to the valuable contributions they make with their work**. This is where recognition comes into the picture. It can be more or less formal and can happen more or less regularly.

Some examples of recognition activities/objects are prizes, certificates, plaques, pins, dinners, saying thank you, planning free trips, offering a meal, saying something positive about their personal qualities, and writing articles about their performance in newspapers and magazines. In Pista Mágica, for example, we often plan trips to stadiums or concerts, if the volunteers themselves show interest in such events or make comments in that sense. Such happens with our Carry project, where we work with young people in situations of social vulnerability. Overall, this works as a

recognition moment for them which allows them to come in contact with experiences which were not easily accessible to them to begin with, due to financial and social constraints.

However, keep in mind that recognition should always be adjusted to the actions of the volunteer (that is why it is only done after the evaluation phase) and that it should not be exaggerated or blown out of proportion, because then it could be seen as something performative.

Finally, it is important to not forget that inclusive volunteering and **Person-Centred Planning** are rooted in the idea that everyone should have the same rights and opportunities and that people with disadvantages should not be excluded from that (Pereira, 2014). If your entity was able to guarantee that access to someone, celebrate the fact that you have taken a step towards truly inclusive volunteering.

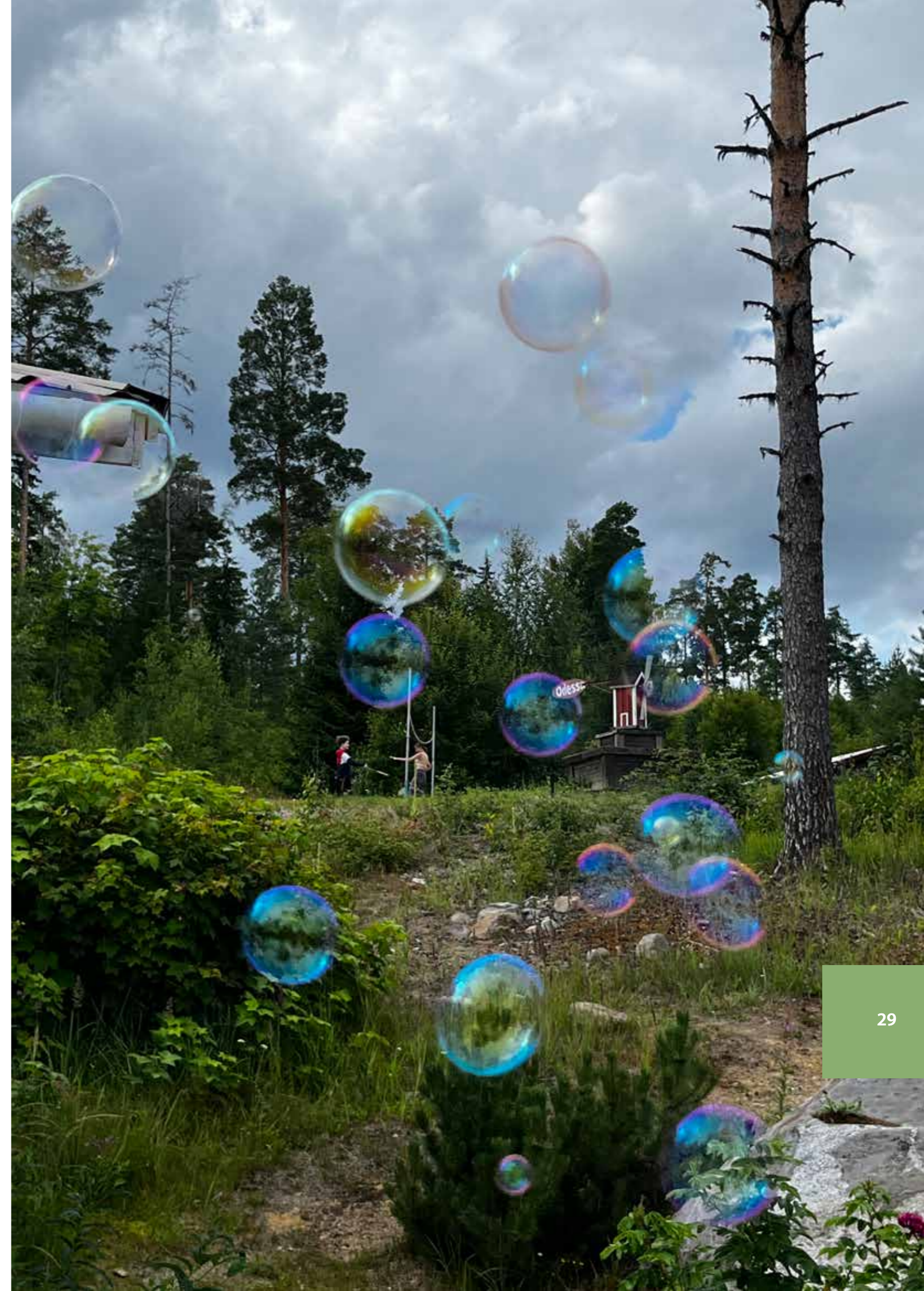
Do not forget to share this victory with other entities too. As a result, you can follow SOSPED's suggestion of:

- Provide information and support also to other entities offering inclusive volunteer activities for youth. Share good practices, participate in networks. Synergy between small organisations and projects and e.g. public actors enable bigger visibility, resources and larger events

Another aspect you must consider is that the person may eventually leave the volunteering opportunity

too. SOSPED refers that, as the volunteer moves on in life and leaves, you should ask for their life-updates after a certain time. In some cases, a person may regret leaving, but doesn't dare to ask to come back to the activity. The fact that a familiar person asks for news and invites you to say hello again is sometimes an easy way to get back into action. So, remember to stay inclusive afterwards also.

Gather a team and create a list of group and individual methods for recognizing your volunteers. Try to have at least one strategy for each volunteer, and at least 5 strategies for the group.



From the “+ Inclusive Volunteering” methodology to a new beginning: final thoughts

In this chapter, we spoke about the importance of the process of Volunteer Management and the Person-Centred Planning methodology when it comes to the promotion of inclusive volunteering. With these approaches in mind, you can ensure volunteering has a great impact not only on the community, but also on the lives of people who live in less favourable social positions. If you belong to a youth organisation which already practises volunteering or if you see potential for it, you can use the tips we gave you on the previous pages to make the whole process more inclusive, especially for young people with less opportunities.

However, our journey does not end here. While working with this methodology, we noticed that volunteering had the potential to work as a tool of social inclusion in itself. In a way, volunteering allows us to work certain aspects of people's lives, such as self-esteem, autonomy, development of skills and talents, new experiences, and enlargement of social support networks. This can be crucial for people who face, in the different spheres of social life, additional challenges. From the economic to the political sphere, and through all the stigma which generally accompanies these groups, volunteering can be an empowering tool.

With this in mind, Pista Mágica developed a new methodology based on the one we have presented to you earlier (“+ Inclusive Volunteering”). Pista Mágica, which is one of the entities involved in Vol'Go, is an entity dedicated to volunteering and innovation

from Portugal and has been testing this in two projects which they are responsible for: “Carry” and “VolunTalento”. The first one aims to attenuate the social exclusion of young people, either they're institutionalised or living in social housing neighbourhoods, through their integration in volunteering activities; while the second is aimed at handicapped people who are over 18 years old.

Here, and unlike what we described previously, we are not using the methodology to turn volunteering's recruitment processes more inclusive themselves, but to promote people's social inclusion while working with entities which maintain a close contact with them. To do this, we follow the PERMA model (Seligman, 2004) of Positive Psychology proposes that happiness or psychological well-being is based on 5 pillars:

- Positive Emotion: what we feel (joy, pleasure, comfort, warmth, etc.);
- Engagement: being fully absorbed in stimulating activities, being in “flow”;
- Relationships with others that are positive, nurturing, rewarding;
- Meaning: serving some purpose that is larger than oneself;
- Accomplishment: pursuit of achievement and mastery.

In order to promote these, we created 3 different phases which are the central core of this new methodology. On the first phase, we try to promote



Image nº 1 - Carry's volunteers helping on a skating activity at a school Source: Pista Mágica



Image nº 2 - VolunTalento and Carry's volunteers cleaning a beach Source: Pista Mágica



VolunTalentos's volunteers at Agrupamento de Escolas de Prado Source: Pista Mágica

training sessions which cover 4 themes: self-knowledge (based on the Hero's Journey – Campbell, 2014), health education (related to the adoption of healthy behaviours that promote biopsychosocial well-being), empathy and education for volunteering (training developed by Pista Mágica in the last 14 years).

In the second phase, we promote Generic Volunteering Activities (GVA), which refers to group volunteering activities directly related to the interests of the beneficiaries and the needs diagnosed in the community. Here, beneficiaries have the opportunity to explore what they enjoy the best and give feedback on how they felt during those.

In the third phase, each beneficiary has at least 2 Person-Centred Planning sessions, based on the Peda-

gogy of Interdependence, a methodology adapted and tested by Pista Mágica. In these sessions, each beneficiary is able to develop their Happiness Project, define concrete dreams and goals, as well as understand, with the help of the technical team, where volunteering can be useful for its realisation.

After these 3 phases, and if possible, the person can decide to practise autonomous volunteering according to the goals they described. With this in mind, and given you have the opportunity to work with young people, you can try to see the potential that this new methodology might have as well. As you may know, young people face multiple challenges, such as difficulty entering the labour's market. By working with young people, you are intervening in an early phase of people's lives which can make a big difference in the long run.



VolunTalentos's participant creating their own Person-Centred Plan Source: Pista Mágica

4. Promoting international inclusive volunteering opportunities

In previous chapters, we have already **defined inclusive volunteering** as volunteering opportunities that are available to all people regardless of age, culture, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, social status or disability.

Cambridge dictionary **defines promotion** as an activity or activities to advertise something (to make something known generally or in public). Promotion is the act of encouraging something to happen or develop.

In general, the youth workers and volunteers are getting aware of inclusive volunteerism and are starting to discuss the importance of **approaching it as a unique form of volunteerism**. Raising awareness of youth workers, volunteers and stakeholders regarding inclusive volunteering practises can be increased

by making it **accessible and strengthen partnerships that make their volunteering programmes inclusive**. For the development of inclusive volunteerism, it is important that different volunteering organizations **share their experience on the national and international level**.

Promotion plays an important role in the development of volunteering so it is important to place **great emphasis on showcasing and building visibility**. Any youth organisation aiming to promote inclusive volunteering has to show that **inclusive volunteering is a form of personal responsibility and a socially recognised value while also showing young people the benefits of getting involved in volunteering**. Different opportunities will lead to different benefits:

- **Social benefits.** Research finds that volunteering can improve companionship, tackle social inclusion and increase social capital. (Howlett, 2004)
- **Physical health benefits.** Volunteering can promote healthy lifestyle and improve self-rated health.
- **Mental wellbeing.** Volunteering can improve confidence, purpose and life satisfaction.
- **Personal growth.** Volunteering can enhance sense of purpose and belonging, compassion and increase the skill of facing new challenges and overcoming obstacles.
- **Instrumental benefits.** Volunteering can help people to develop new skills like communication, networking and teamwork, gain knowledge, develop attitudes and increase employability.

So how do we promote inclusive volunteering opportunities? How do we make them attractive to young people with fewer opportunities?

Inclusive practices for young people with fewer opportunities, e.g. mental health issues or other disabilities or shortcomings are becoming increasingly important in a time when society is changing rapidly. These changes result in a growing number of young people with fewer opportunities who are excluded from living a full life due to different personal, social or psychological backgrounds. For them life is often unpromising and disadvantageous as they face social exclusion. **Inclusive volunteering practices can thus be an opportunity for young people to be fully integrated into social life and become equal members of society.** Youth organizations provide an **informal space where young people can gain valuable experience and connect with peers through a variety of activities**, and an important part of those activities is volunteering.

Virtual Volunteering

A form of volunteering that is gaining recognition is virtual volunteering and it is characterised by the participation of live people, only the services they offer are virtual. It is interesting and welcome that the whole concept of such volunteering is not a substitute for traditional “face-to-face” volunteering. On the contrary, one of the most striking novelties in this innovative use of technology is that it deepens and increases the quantity of the traditional mode

by including volunteers who have previously been unable or unwilling to participate. (Mesec, 2001)

Virtual volunteering, which is considered as inclusive volunteering practise has increased in the time of Covid-19 pandemic and greatly contributed to the resilience of youth work, while at the same time a large proportion of young people with fewer opportunities have become involved.

From Beneficiaries to Volunteers

Still, the two most common types of inclusive volunteering are projects and programmes targeting a specific marginalised group (homeless people, migrants, unemployed people and people with mental health issues) and volunteering done by a participant/beneficiary. A young person who used to be a participant in a programme becomes a volunteer who helps other young people and co-creates an environment that increases social inclusion. An inclusive climate can provide volunteers with a fulfilling and rewarding opportunity to connect with the community. At the same time, it can improve mental health, which is what we, as a society should strive for.

The Importance of Planning

Planning promotion actions of inclusive volunteering opportunities is important in order to involve young people with fewer opportunities in the activities of youth organizations in the long term and to **involve them in the planning of the various programmes and activities**. Working together with young people will **ensure that programmes and activities are also responsive to the contemporary needs for the inclusion of diverse young people in society**. As youth organizations continuously seek more volunteers, opportunities for volunteer inclusion seem limitless. Volunteer organizations tend to target individuals with high “participation potential” in their volunteer recruitment. That is, those individuals with positive volunteering antecedents. **Youth organizations can enhance volunteer inclusion if volunteer recruitment would deliberately target young people with fewer opportunities.** (Meijs, 2021) Inclusive volunteerism practises are able to strengthen civil society and build a culture of volunteerism that can support vulnerable and marginalised young people to take action on issues important to them.

Try to think of inclusive ways of promoting volunteering opportunities available within your organisation by **using various channels that will help you reach young people with fewer opportunities:**

- **Share your experience** of inclusiveness in volunteering with other organisations in order to help them to become more open to diversity.
- **Distribute posters and leaflets** in your local community, covering places such as youth centres, health centres, libraries, post offices, bus and railway stations, employment service, youth events, popular meeting places or social media so you can access them directly.
- Try to **use inclusive images and language** in your promotional materials – make sure they illustrate the diversity of your volunteers and use simple and clear language.
- Try to include your **advertising in the existing communication** materials of other organisations, such as schools, which are already working with young people with fewer opportunities.
- Create a **newsletter** that goes out to members of disability groups.
- Spend some time **building relationships** with community organisations and informal networks that already work with groups of young people with fewer opportunities in volunteering and who can give support in case it is needed.
- **Provide meaningful support** to your volunteers. This includes appropriate training, peer support and supervision.
- **Offer a variety of opportunities** to choose from, leave room to co-create inclusive volunteering opportunities with young people.
- Provide meaningful **support to your volunteer coordinator** if they work with young people with fewer opportunities, including supervision or consultation with specialists.
- Think about the ways you can **help volunteers to prepare better** to volunteer. Organise volunteering trainings, assign a mentor to new volunteers, as some volunteers may need a bit more attention and time, so it is very important to set clear expectations for both sides.
- Try to **develop an action plan of the inclusion process** that is friendly and not overly formal. Be mindful of the language you use.
- Take time to create an inclusive environment within your organisation by **offering diversity training** to youth workers and volunteers and developing equal opportunity policies.
- **Improve the physical accessibility** of the volunteer sites.
- **Think about resources** you already have in terms of transport, covering expenses, virtual volunteering opportunities.
- **Focus on the skills and experiences of each volunteer** and consider how you can fit and adapt the roles to fit their abilities.
- Create a **strategy for implementing long-term inclusive volunteering** practises for your organization. Think about the core values and ask important questions about the organization (aims and purpose, past experience, strengths and weaknesses).
- **Awareness of the experiences** you have had so far (what worked in the past and what did not work).
- **Evaluation of the programmes** with youth workers, volunteers and participants. Evaluation is a process that critically examines a programme. It involves collecting and analysing information on the activities, features and results of the programme.
- Once volunteers have heard about the volunteering opportunities, the next step is to **convince them to actually do it.**

Field research of Volunteer and Go! project showed that youth workers and volunteer coordinators are well aware of the fact that the **best promotion is still oral** - volunteers spread the word about volunteering programmes and inclusive practices conducted in specific youth organisations. The virtual world is a good tool for spreading positive promotion of inclusive volunteering programmes - young people can share their experiences through blogs, vlogs, podcasts and other different ways that essentially reach only young people and are increasingly becoming their exclusive world. In relation to the general public and other relevant stakeholders, it is also advisable to **share good practices of inclusive volunteerism in the traditional media** at local, regional, national and international level.

International Inclusive Volunteering through Erasmus+

More and more inclusive volunteering opportunities are available in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, as the European Commission is keen to offer volunteering opportunities to young people with fewer opportunities. **Inclusion and diversity strategy 2021 – 2027** reinforces inclusion and diversity, builds on the experiences across the different sectors of the Programmes and encourages mutual inspiration and motivation amongst them. This strategy provides an enabling framework for inclusion and diversity projects supported through the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes by:

1. Establishing a common understanding of those who may be considered people with fewer opportunities and set up a coherent framework for including them in the programmes;
2. Increasing commitment to inclusion and diversity from all actors in the programmes' actions and a positive approach to diversity of all kinds in the projects;
3. Supporting beneficiary organisations in establishing more quality projects involving people with fewer opportunities (e.g. provide training, tools, funding, coaching etc.);
4. Reducing barriers to participation in the programmes for people with fewer opportunities and helping applicants and potential applicants to overcome these barriers, as well as establishing appropriate conditions for learning, working or volunteering by addressing their support needs;
5. Fostering the recognition of the experience and competences developed by people with fewer opportunities in the programmes and by the people working with them;
6. Ensuring that the focus on inclusion and diversity is taken into account at all stages of the programmes' management and project life-cycle: before (promotion, outreach, support, assessment, etc.), during (participant selection, preparation, implementation, results, etc.) and after the project (evaluation, dissemination and exploitation of project outcomes, follow-up, etc.);
7. Increase the visibility of inclusion and diversity and its role in the quality implementation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.

More and more inclusive volunteering opportunities are available in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, as the European Commission is keen to offer volunteering opportunities to young people with fewer opportunities.

Mechanisms to support inclusion and diversity through Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes:

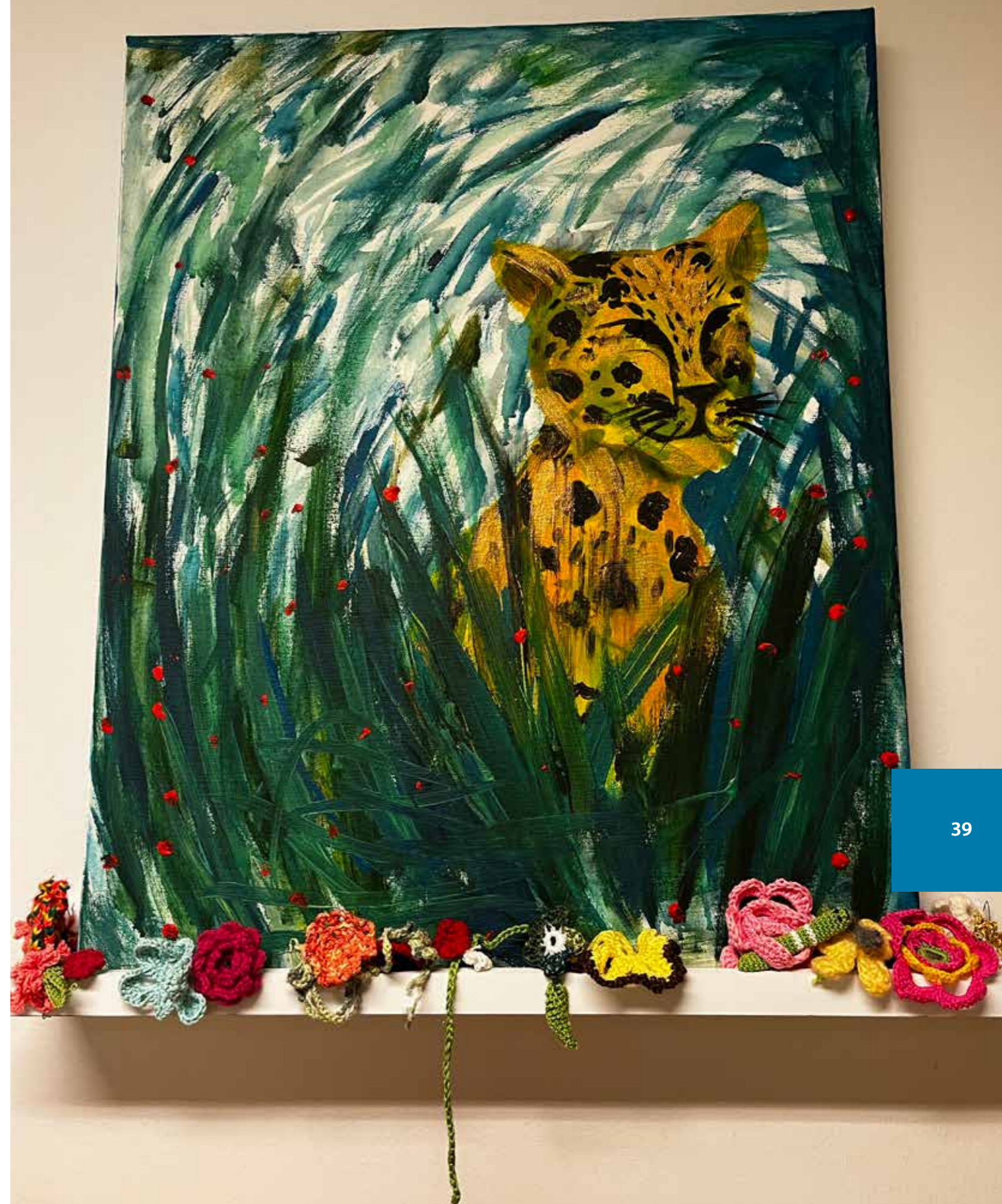
1. Inclusion and diversity as priorities in the assessment process;
2. Accessibility and user-friendliness of the programmes;
3. Preparatory visits;
4. Reinforced mentorship;
5. Dedicated financial support:

- Additional funding aimed at covering costs of any specific needs of participants experiencing fewer opportunities (reinforced mentorship, or costs linked to adapted travel and accommodation, personal assistance or specific intercultural or linguistic preparation).
- Additional financial support for organisations who run projects actively fostering inclusion and diversity – specifically to reach out to hard-to-reach groups, for the additional workload that may result and for staff dedicated to support the full participation of people with fewer opportunities in the project.
- Flexible and easy-to-understand financial mechanisms, in order to better adapt to the needs of the different target groups at national level and to accommodate possible synergies with other national/European funds; including the possibility to finance in advance or on an ongoing basis the costs linked to individual needs to take the financial burden away from the participant(s) with fewer opportunities, as well as from the applicant organisation, or to encourage the portability of national support when participating on mobilities abroad.

- Dedicated funding specifically intended to support smaller organisations with little or no prior experience in submitting applications under the programmes, including a simplified and more flexible funding procedure.
6. Smaller, easier-to-access actions;
 7. Step-by-step capacity building pathways;
 8. Project format and mobility duration;
 9. European activities at the local level;
 10. Online exchanges;
 11. Language learning support.

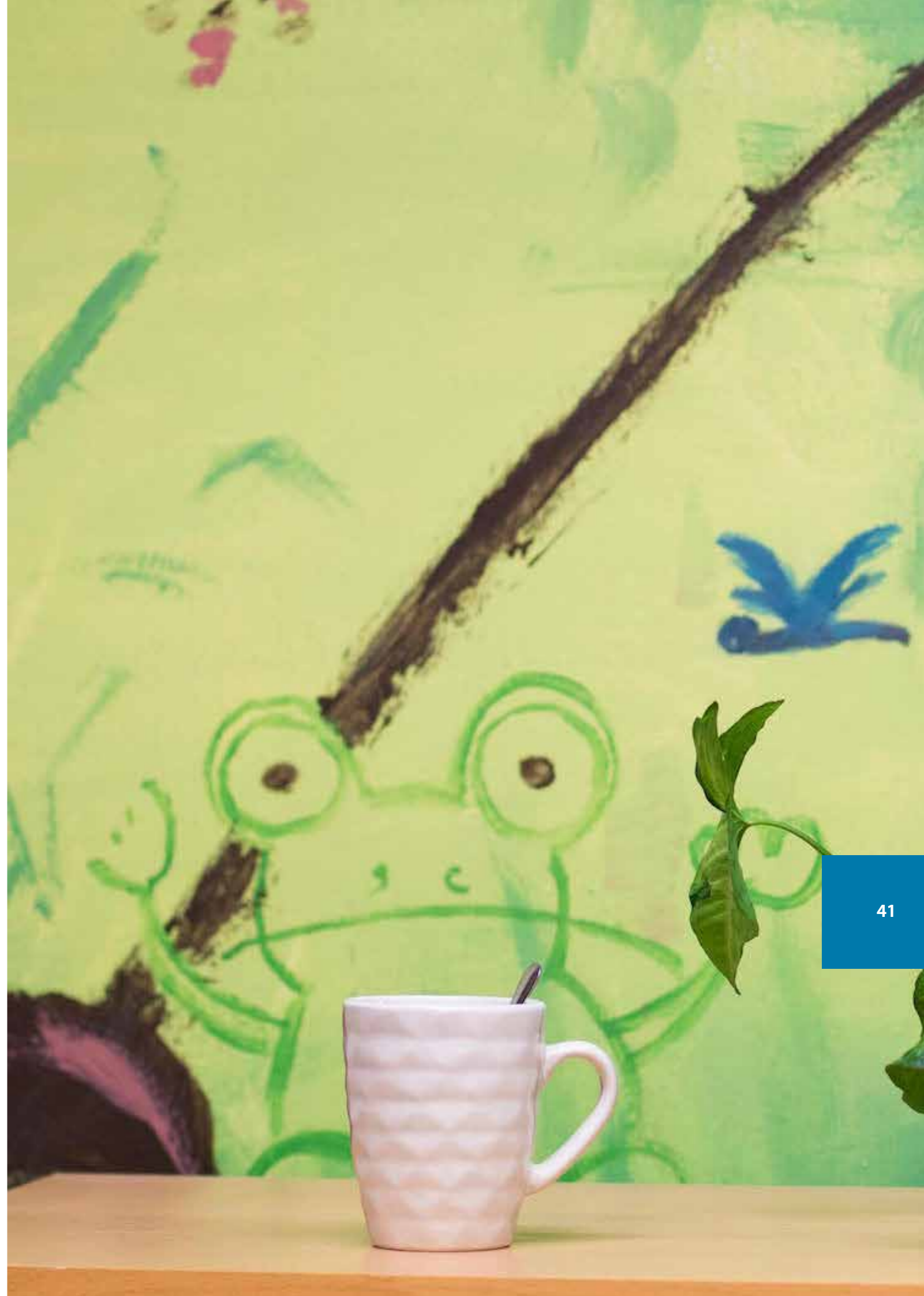
Outreach activities are very important for the programmes in order to make sure all the opportunities are known and also reach those target groups that face difficulties to access the programmes. Concrete approaches and measures to reach out to people with fewer opportunities include:

- Face-to-face meetings or events with specific target groups with fewer opportunities;
- Cooperation with organisations and individuals active in fields relevant to the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities;
- Targeted promotional material and publications in relevant languages, including sign language, and appropriate formats such as large print, easy-to-read and braille;
- Clear and understandable language for information and communication;
- Testimonials, “ambassadors” and role models: former participants with fewer opportunities and alumni networks and organisations such as the Erasmus Student Alumni Alliance (ESAA), the Erasmus Ambassadors or the Europeers, etc. can help promote the programmes to people with fewer opportunities by sharing their own experience with friends, fellow-students, staff in their organisation, journalists or schools.



References & attachments

- Blazinšek, A., Oblak, A., Gornik, J., Jamšek, P., Kronegger, S., Novak, T., & Pinosa, R. (2007). ABC prostovoljstva: priročnik za mentorje. Ljubljana: Zavod center za informiranje, sodelovanje in razvoj nevladnih organizacij.
- Campbell, J. (2014). The hero's journey. San Francisco: New World Library.
- Clark, S. (2003). Voluntary work benefits mental health. *A Life in the Day*, 7(1), 10–14.
- Falvey, M.A. et al. (2011). *Toda a minha vida é um Círculo*. ASSOL Edition.
- Fernandes, S. (2016). *Manual de Apoio na Gestão de Voluntariado*.
- Howlett, S. (2004). Volunteering and mental health: a literature review. *Voluntary Action*, Volume 6, Number 2.
- Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2021 – 2027, SALTO-YOUTH <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/inclusion/inclusionstrategy/>
- Martinelli, F. (1999). *Strategic Planning Manual*. Milwaukee: The Center for Public Skills Training.
- McCurley, S. e Lynch, R. (1996). *Volunteer Management. Mobilizing all the Resources of the Community*. Illinois, Heritage Arts Publishing.
- McCurley, S., Lynch, R. (2011). *Volunteer Management: Mobilizing All the Resources of the Community* (3rd edition). Toronto: Interpub Group.
- McCurley, S., Lynch, R. & Fernandes, S. (2019). *Manual Completo de Gestão de Voluntariado*. Pista Mágica – Associação Edition.
- Meijs C. P. M., L. (2021). You shall (not) pass: Strategies for Third-party gatekeepers to enhance volunteer inclusion. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and non-profit organizations*.
- Mesec, B. (2001). Nova generacija prostovoljcev, ki prihaja, *Revija Socialno delo*, Volume 40, Number 6.
- Knez, P. (2022). Prostovoljstvo: možna pot do boljšega počutja. <https://pamina.si/2022/03/29/prostovoljstvo-mozna-pot-do-boljsega-pocutja/>
- Pearpoint, J. et al. (2001). *PATH: Um caminho para futuros alternativos e com esperança*. ASSOL Edition.
- Pereira, M. (2014). *Apoios Centrados nas Pessoas*. ASSOL Edition.
- Seligman, M. (2004). *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Simon & Schuster.



Example of a Volunteer Position Description

Volunteer Position Description

Title:
Gardening volunteering

Position's purpose:
Maintenance of a garden and orchard belonging to an elderly nursing home, in order to ensure its good conditions and overall appearance.

Tasks:

- Cleaning the garden;
- Pulling/cutting vegetation;
- Pruning the roses;
- Picking up the fruits;

Indicators:
Degree of tasks' completion (periodic evaluation, which must be done by the person who verifies if the tasks are being done and if they are up to date).

Qualifications/Skills/Requirements:

- Ability to use gardening materials (not including machines);*
- Use of protective material associated with the use of the indicated instruments;
- Availability to work as a team with the gardener;
- Listening capacity in order to contact and interact with beneficiary people.

Schedule and duration of the commitment:

- Six months, automatically renewable for equal and successive periods, unless terminated by either party within at least 30 days prior to the end of the initial term, or of the renewal in progress.
- Schedule: Wednesday, from 10 AM to 4 PM, with 1 hour for lunch break.
- A week of previous volunteer work at the entity is required in order to learn all about the routines and safety procedures.

Place of work:
Elderly nursing home.

Supervision of the volunteer work:

- Constant monitoring from the gardener in order to oversee the execution of tasks;
- Tasks' distribution and supervision by the person in charge of the general services.

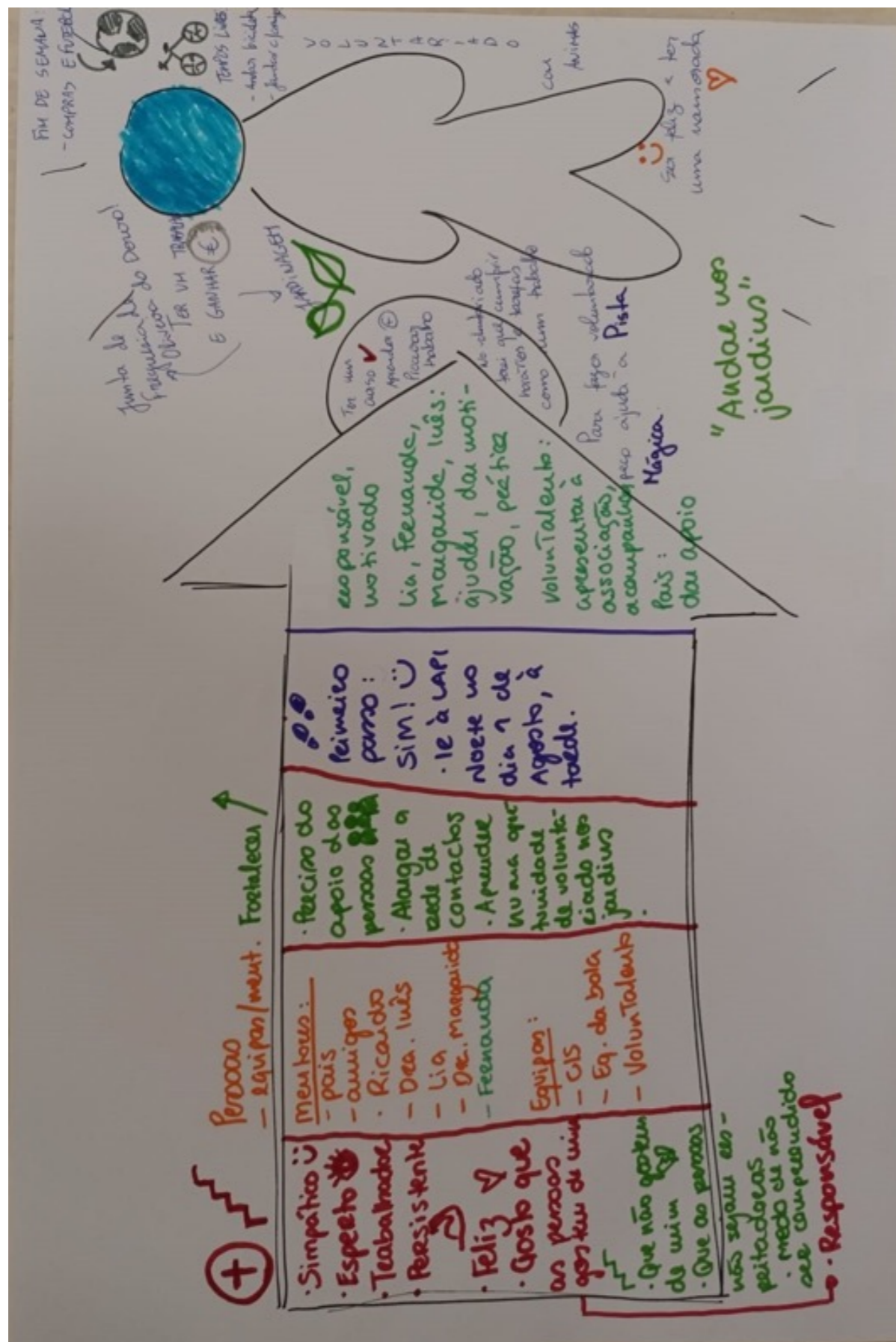
Benefits for the volunteer:

- Access to lunch and an evening snack break;
- Insurance;
- Volunteer agreement;
- Participation in training sessions headed by the entity;
- Participation in the entity's events (Christmas, Easter...).

Example of a Volunteer Profile

<u>Brief characterization</u>	
Volunteer's name	Volunteer A
Birthday	DD/MM/YY YYY
Locality	
Project	
Volunteering's entity	Elderly nursing home
Diagnosis	
Characteristics	Loves to interact with people through chatting and physical contact. Has some cognitive difficulties. Does not know how to write or read. Is easily distracted by outside stimulation. Extremely collaborative. Knows how to use public transport autonomously.
Interests	Gardening; O Porto Football Club;
Contacts	

Example of a Person-Centred Plan



Translation of the Person-Centred Plan,

<p>How does the volunteer see themselves in the future:</p> <p>How do you imagine yourself in 10 years? What do you hope to have already achieved? For example, what would you like to be doing from Monday to Friday? And in your free time?</p> <p>How are you going to move? What will be your greatest talent?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -With a job related to gardening; -Riding a bike and dining with friends as hobbies; -Going shopping and playing football on the weekends; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Surrounded by animals; -Happy and with a girlfriend; -Volunteering; 	<p>What do they need to do in order to achieve their dreams:</p> <p>What are the small steps you can start taking right now in order to reach your dream?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Have a course (which they already have); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Learn more; -Look for a job; -Respect schedules and tasks, which they will do during volunteering;
--	--

Continuation of translation of the Person-Centred Plan,

<p>Strengths that will help them achieve their dreams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Being nice; -Being smart; -Being hardworking; -Being persistent; -Being happy; -Enjoying when I feel others like me; <p>Obstacles which they will need to overcome to achieve their dreams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Being afraid of people not liking me; -Being afraid of people not respecting me; -Being afraid of people not understanding me; 	<p>Mentors who can help them achieve their dreams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Parents; -Friends; -Ricardo; -Mrs. Inês; -Lia; -Mrs. Margarida; -Fernanda; <p>Teams which can help them achieve their dreams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social Inclusion Centre; -Football team; -The project's team (VolunTalentos); 	<p>Aspects that can strengthen the volunteer's path (what kind of volunteering opportunity can help with that):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Needing other people's support; -Enlargement of support network; -Having a volunteering opportunity related to gardening; 	<p>First step: What next?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ready to take it! -Go to an elderly nursing home on August 1st, during the evening, to get to know the people and see the gardening work that needs to be done;
--	--	---	--

Continuation of translation of the Person-Centred Plan, on page 45

Overview of the plan:

How do you feel about this plan?

Why?

Would you like to change something?

Do you feel that you have what it takes to reach your dream?

-The volunteer feels they are responsible and motivated to pursue the plan;

No changes mentioned;

-The workers at the Social Inclusion Centre will help them by giving them motivation and offering help;

-Pista Mágica will accompany them;

-Parents will give them support;

volgo.eu



48



Co-funded by
the European Union



SOSPED

Pista Mágica
VOLUNTARIADO & INOVAÇÃO



The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.