

## The Volunteer *Passport* Scheme

### WHAT IS THE VOLUNTEER PASSPORT?

The volunteer passport is a link between the volunteer and voluntary and community organisations.

It provides evidence of the volunteers skills and experience in different forms of volunteering and in all types of voluntary organisations.

The passport will follow the volunteer throughout his/her volunteering career to demonstrate how he/she is developing through his/her experience.

### WHAT DOES THE VOLUNTEER PASSPORT DO?

The purpose of the passport is:

- To list and describe in detail each role the volunteer undertakes
- To document any training undertaken by the volunteer
- To integrate these elements in a profile of the volunteer
- To accredit the skills and competences developed through volunteering

### HOW DID THE VOLUNTEER PASSPORT SCHEME START?

The Volunteer Passport was launched by France Bénévolat in 2007. It was based on

- a set of tools already drawn up by other partner organisations,
- on the example of a similar scheme in Switzerland,
- and on the experience of a regional volunteer centre in France.

The passport consists of a set of records containing:

- details about the individual,
- details on the volunteering assignment (description, skills developed, any special notes),
- details of any certificates awarded by the organisation (including a description of the achievement, skills developed, any special notes),
- a schedule of all the volunteering roles undertaken by the individual,
- a record of any training, qualifications or continuing professional development undertaken by the volunteer.

### WHO SUPPORTS THE VOLUNTEER PASSPORT SCHEME?

The Volunteer Passport is backed by public sector organisations such as:

- The Department of Health, Youth and Sport in France (Le Ministère de la Santé, de la Jeunesse et des Sports)
- The Department of National Education in France (Le Ministère de l'Education Nationale)
- AFPA – The national agency for lifelong learning (in France)
- ANPE – The national agency for Employment (in France)
- Public bodies such as, Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (The Government Investment Bank in France)

The Volunteer Passport costs just one euro and can be purchased through the France Bénévolat network or through our partner volunteer organisations.

Initially, 15,000 copies were printed in 2007 and a further 40,000 copies were released in 2008. More recently the City of Paris alone, has distributed 10,000 copies to the voluntary organisations that work with the local authority.

## WHO IS THE VOLUNTEER PASSPORT INTENDED FOR?

The main target groups for the volunteer passport scheme are:

- Young people, in any volunteering role
- Employees looking for a change of career
- Unemployed people seeking to develop their skills and experience

It will also help volunteer-involving organisations to better match those individual volunteers to the roles they have available.

## HOW WILL IT BENEFIT THE VOLUNTEER?

Documenting your volunteering experience will give you the chance to

- build your professional profile by bringing together the different responsibilities you have taken on, the training you have undertaken, and the achievements you have made through volunteering activities over time,
- define clearly what the organisation expects you to do, in each role you take on,
- have the skills and competence you develop assessed objectively, so that you know what progress you are making through volunteering and can decide what new skills you need to develop,
- get the most out of your volunteering experience and potentially add value to your future career.

## HOW WILL IT BENEFIT THE ORGANISATION?

Documenting the skills, competence and experiences you offer your volunteers, will give you the chance to

- guide and support the individual volunteer more effectively
- define clearly what is expected of the individual, what is involved in the role they are taking on and the level of responsibility required of them
- get better results by making the most of the skills, competences and personal abilities volunteers bring to your organisation and by managing the volunteer experience more effectively.

## AND FOR BOTH PARTIES.....

The volunteer passport will help make a better match between potential volunteers and the volunteering roles that organisations have on offer.

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