

# Getting Started



## SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS WITH A DISABILITY

# 15%

of people with a disability volunteer according to census 2022

### Case Study

David lives with a disability and wanted to start volunteering. The Placement Officer in the Volunteer Centre put a lot of time into getting to know him, deciding on a role that would suit him and that she thought would be open to him.

Then she made introductions with the VIO and went with David for support the first few times he volunteered. He has been volunteering in that role for two years now. His confidence has improved so much that he is now starting to look for paid work.

**Remember, there is a wealth of knowledge across the VC network. Always reach out to your VC peers or VI for advice and support!**



### Talk to the volunteer

Every volunteer is different and should be treated as such. Talk to the volunteer directly where possible to get to know them and see what they might be suited to.

There is no 'one size fits all' so approach each volunteer on a case by case basis as the support needed might be different in each case.



### Work in partnership

Provide wrap around support by involving the volunteer's support/key worker. Engage with the key worker alongside the volunteer and work in partnership to identify and facilitate a suitable opportunity.

Their support worker may be in a position to volunteer alongside them on an ongoing basis or for their first few shifts, depending on the needs of the volunteer.



### Support VIOs

There's little point in asking VIOs in the abstract whether they are open to including someone with a disability. VIOs are often willing and able to be more inclusive when VCs can facilitate practical support to allay fears, break down barriers, build confidence and create time and space to understand more about a particular volunteer's support needs.



### Be prepared to invest extra time

Supporting volunteers with disabilities is a time consuming but hugely rewarding process. Getting to know the volunteer, engaging with their key worker and working with the right VIO can take a lot of time so be prepared. However, as one Placement Officer put it "Inclusion is everyone's responsibility – it doesn't just happen - is one of the things I enjoy most about my job!"