



# National Volunteer Management Conference

**Wednesday 1 May 2024**

Sheraton Athlone Hotel, Gleeson Street,  
Athlone, County Westmeath, N37 D953



**Volunteer  
Ireland**  
Obair Dheonach Éireann

**BETTER  
IMPACT**  
Volunteer Management Software

# Conference programme

09:00 **Informal yoga and wake up session** Kristín Kristjánsdóttir (*optional*)

09:30 **Registration opens** Informal networking

10:00 **Conference and venue orientation** Mariana Vieira da Rocha

## Morning plenary

10:10 **Opening address and Launch of the European Parliament Election 2024 Vote Volunteer Vision campaign in Ireland** Nina Arwitz

10:20 **Protecting your volunteers' data is everyone's responsibility**  
Tony Goodrow

10:50 **Redefining Volunteer Engagement: Strategies for Change** Zsé Varga

11:00 **Learning and capacity building review** Stuart Garland

11:10 **Mid-morning tea and coffee break** Chat & connect with your peers

11:30 **Morning Masterclasses (*select one*)**

- **Stop underreporting the impact of volunteering** Tony Goodrow
- **"Breathe", maintaining a mentally healthy lifestyle** Jenna Walsh
- **Managing risk in your volunteer programme** Stuart Garland
- **Advocating for your volunteer programme** Jo Gibney

12:30 **Lunch** Informal networking

13:45 **Speed Networking** What's your volunteer engagement challenge?

14:15 **Afternoon Masterclasses (*select one*)**

- **Volunteering to combat loneliness in Demark** Dannie Lønne Larsen
- **Offering flexibility in your volunteer programme** Zsé Varga
- **AI, its impact and use in our volunteer programmes** John Kilroy
- **European funding opportunities for capacity building** Jemma Lee

15:15 **Comfort break**

15:30 **Afternoon Plenary**

**Investing in Volunteers Awards** Denise Hayward & Nina Arwitz

**We Act: Highlighting the impact of your volunteers** Claire McGowran

**The young person's perspective** Lauren Sweeney & Eva Blackwell

**Research: Best practice in volunteer inclusion** Dr. Maura Coulter

**Closing remarks** Nina Arwitz

16:30 Conference Ends

16:45 **Leaders of Volunteers Happy Hour** Informal networking (*optional*)

## Welcome

A warm welcome to Volunteer Ireland's annual conference. With a mix of national and international speakers, eight master classes and networking over the course of the day, we look forward to engaging with you at the premiere event for Leaders of Volunteers.

## Updates

For the latest updates visit [www.volunteer.ie/nvmc](http://www.volunteer.ie/nvmc)

## Volunteering Village

Drop in early and join us for a yoga wake-up session or network with colleagues and visit some of our exhibitors' stands during the day.

### Better Impact

Volunteer Management Software and how it can help your programme.

### Léargas

Drop by and learn about Erasmus+ funding opportunities

### Volunteer Ireland

What are our volunteering asks ahead of the European Elections?

### We Act

Find out how to Communicate the value of your volunteer programme

### Learning and Capacity Building Team

Pick up some resources from our recent European volunteering projects

# Speaker Biographies



## **Nina Arwitz, CEO Volunteer Ireland**

Nina's background is in the environmental non-profit sector where she focused on social inclusion, engaging new audiences and volunteering; as well as fundraising, campaigning and strategic development. Nina is responsible for the overall strategic direction of Volunteer Ireland, and ensuring that we deliver our mission to promote, support and advocate for excellent, accessible and inclusive volunteering in Ireland.



## **Eva Blackwell, Jigsaw Youth Mental Health**

Eva started volunteering for Jigsaw during her final year of completing her Bachelors in Human Development and History. With Jigsaw she has been involved with numerous projects that allows her to pursue my passion for mental health advocacy. Eva is passionate about using her voice and experience to instigate change, so I am also involved with Spun-out on their action panel and with AsIAM, on their accreditation panel.



## **Dr. Maura Coulter, Associate Dean, Dublin City University**

Maura is the Associate Dean for Research at DCU Institute of Education and Associate Professor in the School of Arts Education and Movement. Her scholarly interests include professional development, leadership and identity, and social justice pedagogies. She is currently engaged in research projects with a particular focus on communities of practice, leadership and teacher-educator identity, social justice pedagogies, and pedagogies of vulnerability.



## **Stuart Garland, Learning and Capacity Building Manager, Volunteer Ireland**

Stuart previously was a Volunteer Manager with a leading homeless charity and the manager of a Volunteer Centre for several years. Stuart has worked in a range of roles in the third sector since and has a background in youth work. He was a Volunteer in Scouting Ireland for over 30 years. He has extensive direct Volunteer Management experience with managing volunteer teams of over 1,400 volunteers.



## **Jo Gibney, Coaching with Jo (England)**

Jo is a Life-Work Balance Coach based in England, helping people find their life-work balance, say yes to more of what they love, and live their version of a happy and successful life without burning out. Jo previously worked in the charity sector, supporting those who work with volunteers. She helps people understand where and how you can influence others in order to better advocate for your volunteer programme – and yourself. .



## **Tony Goodrow, CEO Better Impact (Canada)**

Tony is the founder of Better Impact, a software company that has been helping leaders of volunteer since 2001. As the founding chair of a residential hospice, he sought out volunteer management software for the hospice to use, but at the time, none of the software that could be used for managing volunteers was web based. He also sits on the board of a local non-profit music festival and is a volunteer chair for his neighborhood home owner's association.

# Speaker Biographies



## **John Kilroy, Founder Digital Learning Institute**

John has been driving the standard in the use of technology to support personalised and adaptive learning. Since the acceleration in the use of generative Artificial Intelligence, John has been working with a wide range of organisations to help them build their understanding on the application of AI. Furthermore, John has worked closely with industry to design and rollout the first Professional Certificate in AI for Education available globally.



## **Gemma Lee, Senior Support and Development Officer Erasmus+, Léargas**

Gemma is a youth and community worker with a passion for youth empowerment and gender equality. She believes in the value of volunteering and lifelong learning for building resilient and equal societies. An Applied Social Studies graduate with a passion for youth empowerment and gender equality, and a belief in the value of volunteering and lifelong learning for building resilient and equal societies.



## **Dannie Lønne Larsen, Project manager FriSe, (Denmark)**

Dannie works with Volunteer Centres in Denmark. FriSe is the national umbrella organisation for local volunteer centres and self-help organisations across all of Denmark. FriSe are independent of government, party political and religious interests. Dannie has been in various contexts and organisations been a volunteer for the last 30 years and for the last 18 years he has been employed in two different NGOs.



## **Lauren Sweeney, Finance and Administrator Officer, Volunteer Ireland**

Lauren believes volunteering is an integral part of society and can influence positive change immensely. She has been involved in volunteering over the years in her local rugby club in Greystones, coaching youth girl's teams and she is passionate about girls and women in sport. Lauren also volunteers with the DSPCA fostering puppies and is part of an organisation 'Consider It Cakes' who bake birthday cakes for people who are in direct provision or unhoused.



## **Jenna Walsh, Mental Health Promotion Officer, Mayo Mental Health Association**

Jenna has a background in Public Health and Mental Health Promotion, works on the Schools Education Programmes and Health Promotion Initiatives which are rolled out at Mayo Mental Health Association. Most recently Jenna volunteered as Youth Leader with Ballina 2023 Volunteer Programme. Her qualifications include a Bachelor of Science, Public Health and Promotion, a Bachelor of Science, Health Science and Physiology as well as a Postgraduate Degree in Mental Health Promotion.



## **Zsé Varga, Volunteering Development Programme Manager, Volunteer Ireland**

Zsé's role focuses on the delivery of actions in the National Volunteering Strategy. These actions look at developing a fresh ground where flexible and diverse volunteering can grow. She has a background in volunteer management training and consultancy, which she practised in Ireland, in her native Hungary, and many other European countries. Zsé is passionate about volunteering and she is also a proud Blood Bikes East volunteer.

Thank you to volunteers from **Midlands Polish Community** and **MPC TV** who are recording the event. Thank you to **Leah Carroll** our volunteer photographer.



[www.volunteer.ie/nvmc](http://www.volunteer.ie/nvmc)

# Morning masterclasses (11:30 to 12:30)



## Stop underreporting the impact of volunteering Tony Goodrow (Red masterclass)

The hours your volunteers contribute are an important metric, but those alone do not accurately communicate the value to the community that is created through volunteer engagement. In this workshop you'll learn:

- A new approach to using for the Wage Replacement Value provided by the Independent Sector
- How to determine the overall Community Benefit Value (CBV),
- New approaches to volunteer placement that increase CBV
- How to prepare new types of reports that create compelling fundraising communications and can fuel data driven decisions.

## "Breathe", maintaining a mentally healthy lifestyle Jenna Walsh (Yellow masterclass)

This workshop will give you an insight into what mental health is and what Mayo Mental Health Association does

We will also cover

- What risk & protective factors in relation to maintaining a mentally healthy lifestyle
- How to support someone who may be experiencing a mental health difficulty & supports available
- How language & influence we have on each other.

## Managing risk in your volunteer programme Stuart Garland (Light Blue Masterclass)

Risk management should be integrated into every aspect of a volunteer programme. Although much of the analysis and policy development takes place at the board level of the organisation, the overall effectiveness is only as good as the staff and volunteers who carry it out. We will explore how to explain risk management and appreciate its importance regarding volunteers, service users and organisational value.

## Advocating for your volunteer programme Jo Gibney (Purple Masterclass)

Do you feel like the impact and value volunteers bring to your organisation isn't fully understood? Do you feel like you're constantly negotiating for more resources or even buy-in from senior stakeholders? Are you tired of repeating the same messages, and getting the same results? Influencing in order to advocate is a skill much needed by volunteer managers and leaders. It is more than just saying the right words. This workshop will help you start to understand where and how you can influence others in order to better advocate for your volunteer programme – and yourself.



## Presentation of Investing in Volunteers Awards

Investing in Volunteers is the UK and Ireland Quality Standard that helps assess and improve the quality of your volunteer management and involvement.

Achieving the standard shows your current, and potential, volunteers how much they are valued and gives them confidence in your ability to provide an outstanding volunteer experience. .

Presentations will be made at the conference to the following achievers:

**Age Action**  
First assessment

**ALONE**  
Second renewal

**Aware**  
Second renewal

**COPE Galway**  
First Renewal

**Gas Networks Ireland**  
First assessment

**Solas Project**  
First Assessment

**Women's Aid Ireland**  
First Assessment

## Afternoon masterclasses (14:15 to 15:15)



### **Volunteering to combat loneliness in Demark** **Dannie Lønne Larsen (Orange masterclass)**

The National Action Plan against Loneliness in Denmark describes 75 initiatives aimed at combating loneliness. Voluntary organisations play a crucial role in combating and preventing loneliness in the "Leisure and Communities" area. The initiatives are aimed at both framework conditions and structural changes, but there are also very concrete initiatives that any voluntary association can take up and thus make a decisive difference for people affected by loneliness.



### **Offering flexibility in your volunteer programme** **Zsé Varga (Pink masterclass)**

Is your volunteer programme struggling to engage new volunteers? Does your volunteer programme need to catch up with a changing world? But how do we go about it? What's all this flexibility in volunteering and flexible volunteer roles? What does it look like in real life? Aren't there too many risks? How can we be agile and flexible without compromising our aims and services? If you think flexibility in volunteering wouldn't work in your organisation, this is the session for you to start to diminish your doubts.



### **AI, its impact and use in our volunteer programmes** **John Kilroy (Green Masterclass)**

This interactive session will help you demystify the potential role of AI in volunteer management programmes and it's a practical look at the application of AI tools in areas like volunteer coordination, recruitment and training. It will explore a framework to support the development of an AI action plan for volunteer management and explore questions such as:

- What is the core terminology and definitions that underpin AI?
- What are the use cases for AI in volunteer management programmes?
- How can you create an AI action plan for volunteer management?



### **European funding opportunities for capacity building** **Jemma Lee (Blue masterclass)**

Find out how European funding can support you to upskill your volunteers and volunteer managers, develop your organisation and make an impact in your community. Léargas manage exchange programmes in education, youth and community work, and vocational education and training. Léargas are the National Agency for Erasmus+ in Adult Education, School Education, Vocational Education and Training, Youth and Sport.

## StinuYoga

### **Informal yoga and wake up session**

**Tune in to tune out with**  
**Kristín Kristjánsdóttir**

Rushing in traffic or public transport to get to the conference? Feeling a bit frazzled and stuck in your head? Join this session to get out of your head and into your body. Kristin will lead you through gentle stretches, movements and breath awareness to bring your attention inwards. We will finish with a short meditation to allow you to experience stillness before your busy day ahead.

This free session is beginners friendly – you do not have to have done yoga, meditation or mindfulness before! Come as you are, but your phone and day away for a short while, and just tune in, to tune out.

### **Networking**

Today is about meeting with and networking with your peers, chat to colleagues but also take the opportunity to connect with leaders of volunteers you haven't met before. We'll have a facilitated session at 13:45 to explore what is your volunteer engagement challenge.

Don't forget to share your "take ways" from each of our masterclasses which we'll share after the conference.

Join the conversation  
on social media with the  
hashtag #NVMC2024

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