



Volunteer Ireland

Obair Dheonach Éireann

Ethical Standards Policy & Procedure

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1. Policy

Policy Statement

Volunteer Ireland (VI) is committed to making ethical choices that are in line with the principles of the community and voluntary sector in Ireland, and best practice principles of volunteering.

- Our values, as laid out in our 2023–2027 strategic plan, are: Integrity, Inclusion, Ambition and Collaboration.
- These values, along with our core belief that volunteer wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do, will guide our choices.
- This policy allows us to be consistent and transparent in the ethical choices we make.

Purpose

To provide a framework of acceptable practice to ensure that the values, principles, and standards of the organisation are being met

Scope

- All areas of VI's work are covered by this policy, including our work with public, private, and not-for profit organisations.
- However, it is most relevant to inform who we will work with, I-VOL, sponsorship, and our work with corporates on employee volunteering.

Responsibility

- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for ensuring that the policy in this document is implemented efficiently and effectively.
- All staff and volunteers (including voluntary Board members) are expected to facilitate this process.

2. General Information

2.1 Who we work with

- VI has a leading role to play in promoting good practice in volunteering across all sectors in Ireland. Therefore, VI will work with the non-profit, public, and private sectors on topics relating to volunteering.
- VI will work with the public and private sector in a variety of ways to improve quality, access, and awareness of volunteering, such working with companies and public bodies on employee volunteering and delivering training and consultancy.
- VI prides itself on its core values and ethical standards and will only work with organisations whose business practices respect human dignity, are not in breach of law and uphold VI's values.
- Whether or not VI will work with a particular organisation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by senior staff of VI.
 - When evaluating an organisation, senior staff of VI will undertake a due diligence process including media coverage, political affiliations and other information deemed suitable by senior staff.
 - If there is uncertainty or disagreement about whether to work with a particular organisation, this will be taken to the Board of Directors whose decision will be final.
 - If senior management have a material debate about whether to work with a particular organisation and make a decision (without taking it to the Board), the Board will be informed of the debate and decision at the next Board meeting.
- If a decision is made not to work with a particular organisation, the reasoning behind this decision will be laid out clearly in writing.

2.2 Affiliation

VI is a non-political body, and we are not affiliated with any political party.

2.3 Investing of Funds

VI will consider the ethical implications of any investment of funds.

2.4 Fundraising & Applying for Grants

When fundraising and applying for grants, VI will not "chase the money" but will only fundraise for projects that are in line with our strategic plan.

2.5 Accepting a Contract

VI will choose to accept a contract based mainly on income generation, only if the following conditions are met:

- It does not affect our charitable status
- It is in line with our charitable objects
- It is not contradictory to our core principles, and

It does not bring serious negative consequences such as significant reputational damage to the organisation.

2.6 Advertising Roles on I-VOL

- VI reserves the right to choose to advertise volunteer roles with the private sector on I-VOL, in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of I-VOL (<https://www.i-vol.ie/terms-and-conditions-for-organisations/>) and adhering to any conditions of funding.
- For example, volunteer roles related to events and festivals that are run by for-profit companies could be advertised on I-VOL if they are deemed to bring a financial, social, environmental, or other benefit toward the community.
- We will also consider whether the role is a meaningful volunteering role and does not replace a paid job.
- We will evaluate whether to advertise volunteer roles with the private sector, on a case-by-case basis.
- We may also choose to advertise volunteer roles with the public sector on I-VOL; for example, volunteering roles with the Health Service Executive (HSE).
 - We will evaluate whether to do so on a case-by-case basis
- We will consider whether the role is a meaningful volunteering role and does not replace a paid job.

2.7 Sponsorship

- VI will actively seek and accept sponsorship from corporates, for example for major events such as National Volunteering Week, the annual volunteer managers' conference and the VI Awards.
- We will carefully evaluate a potential sponsor before accepting the sponsorship. This will include considerations such as potential reputational damage to VI of being associated with the company.
- In delivering a partnership with a sponsor, VI will:
 - Carefully consider what rights to hand over to the sponsor
 - Protect the integrity of VI and the wellbeing of volunteers
- VI will consider giving title sponsorship to a sponsor, in exceptional circumstances and where the risks and benefits have been carefully considered.
- Full consideration of all terms of the sponsorship will be considered as part of the decision-making process.

2.8 Corporate Employee Volunteering

- We will work with corporates on employee volunteering, for example through the provision of employee volunteering projects, workshops, webinars and consulting.
- We recognise that corporates may be at different stages of development in terms of employee volunteering.
- We will work with companies that are very progressive and advanced in terms of employee volunteering, but also with those that are just starting to think about it and need a lot of support.
- In all our engagement with corporates, we will aim to make a sustainable change, build capacity, and empower companies and organisations to engage directly with one another rather than relying on VI indefinitely.
- In our engagement with corporates on employee volunteering, we will put the wellbeing of the volunteer first (e.g., rather than corporate priorities).
- The following ethos statement guides our work with corporates:

- Project Selection: We work to support essential needs in Irish communities. Where possible we partner with small, local, grassroots organisations and DEIS schools that cannot easily access corporate support. We aim to make all employee volunteering activities meaningful and impactful. We share our aims with our corporate partners. We use these aims as the basis to identify and select the most needed and most impactful employee volunteer activities.
- Purchasing: We prioritise buying products from Irish businesses. We purchase products with sustainable packaging where possible and aim to dispose of waste in a sustainable manner.
- Expenditure: We are aware that our budgets, staffing and expenditure must be used efficiently and sensibly and keeping our non-profit status in mind.

3. Monitoring & Review

- The policy will be monitored by the CEO and any issues will be raised at regularly scheduled staff meetings and actioned as required.
- The policy will be reviewed by the CEO & Governance Committee every three years, or sooner if required.
- The policy will be presented to the Board for final review and ratification.

Records

Record of Meetings, Document Control Register.