Good Practice in Inclusive Volunteering

UNIVERSITY of York

Mental Health Social Care Research Centre

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RIPON MUSEUMS

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Background

- Volunteers make a real difference to the voluntary sector
- People volunteer for different reasons eg. gain new skills, retain a meaningful role in retirement
- Important for mental wellbeing and making social connections
- Mental health problems may make volunteering difficult for some people – low confidence, stigma, lack of workplace experience
- Inclusive volunteering is a way for people who need extra support to access volunteering opportunities
- Inclusive volunteering more common in health and care settings – considered 'a good thing' but limited evidence base

Study aims

- To explore how and why inclusive volunteering works and develop a guide to share this with others
- To explore outcomes for people receiving inclusive volunteering and the organisation providing it
- To assess costs and potential economic consequences of inclusive volunteering

Methods

- Semi-structured interviews (7 volunteers & 8 staff)
- Reflective diary (3 volunteers)
- Observation of volunteers (15 days)
- Pre-post questionnaires - 3 & 6 month follow-up (8 volunteers)

Theory of Change
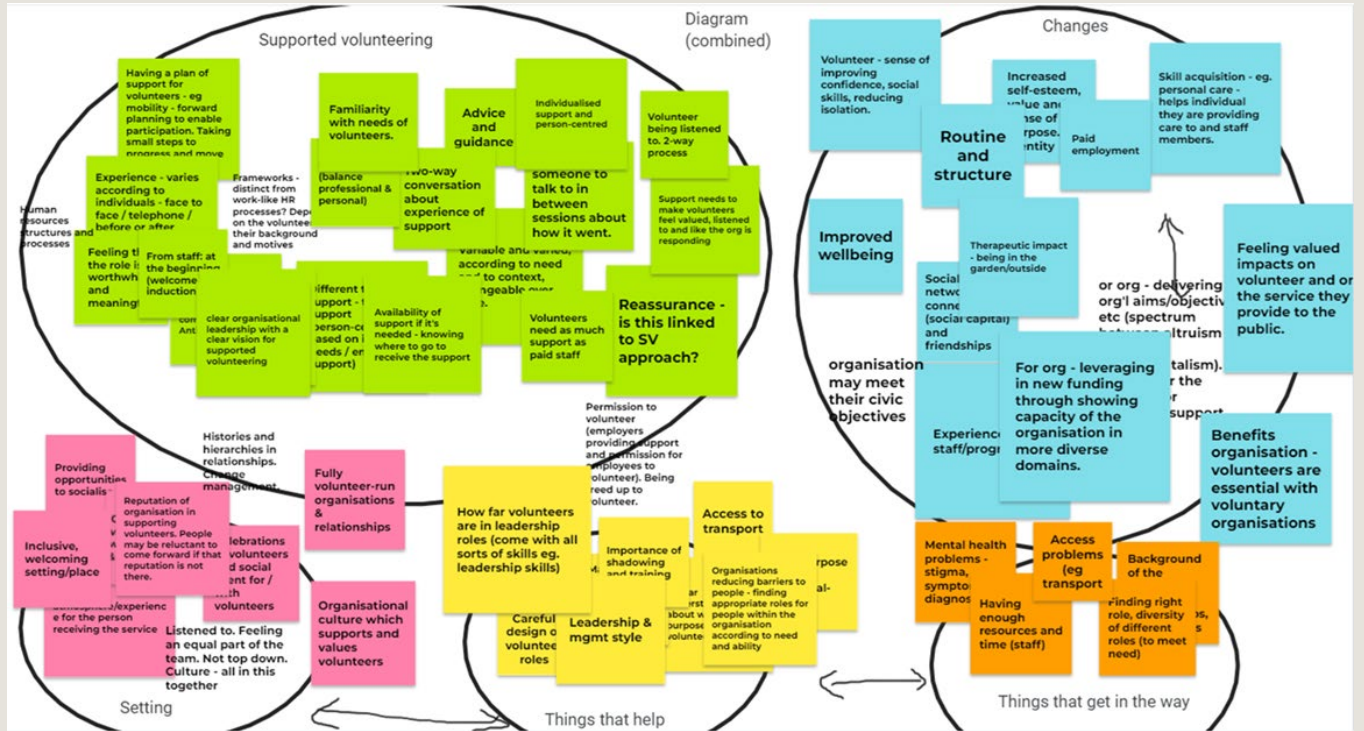
Theory of Change

THEORY OF CHANGE FOR INCLUSIVE VOLUNTEERING

Key elements of inclusive volunteering

Organisational structure and procedures:
- Agreed referral process and recruitment plan
- Inclusive volunteering central to organisational culture and values
- Leadership, vision and shared purpose for inclusive volunteering
- Inclusive volunteering framework in place
- Clear training, support plan and reviewing procedures

Person-centred:
- Empathic, approachable staff
- Trusting working relationship
- Regular communication/feeling listened to
- Advice and guidance; reassurance and emotional support
- 1:1 support; buddying and support in-situ
- Manageable tasks and realistic goals

How it fosters change
- Providing structure and routine
- Developing new skills and knowledge
- Carrying out meaningful role
- Enjoyment and commitment
- Connecting with diverse range of people
- Responding to changing needs

Individual outcomes

Positive relationships
- Increased social connections
- Sense of community
- Reduced social isolation

Self-growth
- Increased confidence and self-esteem
- Improved wellbeing

Identity and purpose
- Sense of purpose and identity
- New skills, learning and knowledge
- Structure and routine
- Employment or training

Organisational outcomes
- Increases diversity
- Raises profile
- Leverage for funding
- Bring skills and knowledge
- Volunteers can be essential to running the organisation ...

Enabling factors and barriers

Leadership and management style reflective of inclusive volunteering
Volunteers in management roles and involvement in decision-making
Volunteer roles that match need and skills

Limited organisational resources
Individual factors e.g. wellbeing
Socio-economic and community factors

Inclusive volunteering guide

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A GUIDE TO SETTING UP AN **INCLUSIVE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMME**

Beth Casey
Martin Webber

Guide:

Inclusive Volunteering at Ripon Museum Trust

Our objective – 'Volunteering at RMT should be accessible and enjoyable for everyone'

How is this funded?

Who is this for?

How it Works

- Working with partnering organisations through a referrals/ placement system

- Entry discussion with Volunteer Manager

- Person centred approach

- Flexible inductions

- Staff support

Key Learning Points

- Development of staffing structures

- Evolution of volunteering culture

- Flexible opportunities
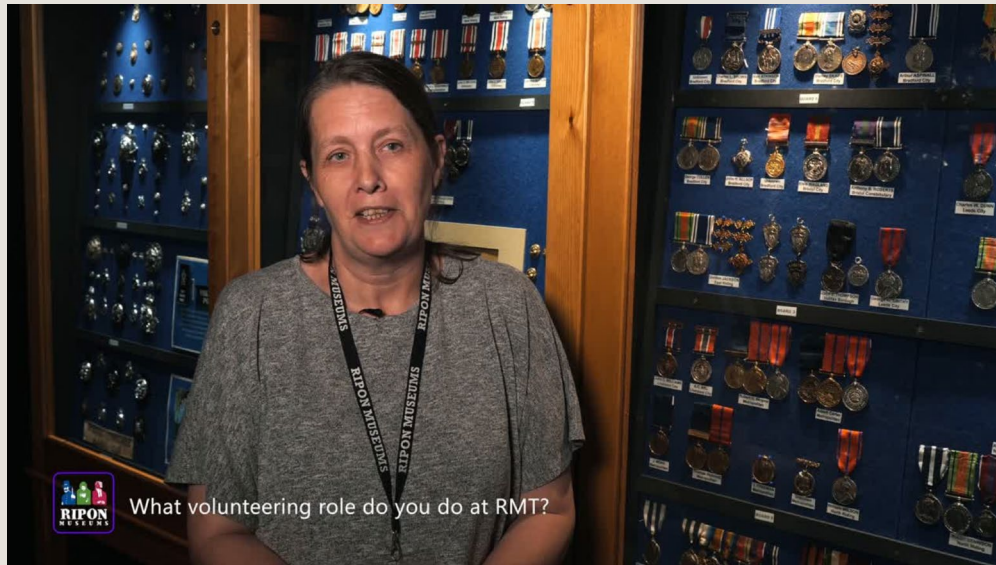
Impact

Organisational

- Organisational Culture
- Accessibility improvements for broader audiences
- Economic Resilience

Individual

- Improved confidence
- Building relationships
- Going onto paid employment

Volunteer experiences …

Discussion

How might you go about developing or enhancing inclusive volunteering in your organization?

What might you need to change or develop to make it happen?

Thank you!

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