

IWA Volunteer Strategy

2019 – 2021





IWA Vision

Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) has a vision of an Ireland where people with disabilities enjoy equal rights, choices and opportunities in how they live their lives, and where our country is a model worldwide for a truly inclusive society.

IWA Mission

Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) works with, and on behalf of, people with physical disabilities to drive positive change in Ireland through the influencing of public policy, the provision of quality services and enabling accessibility to all aspects of society.

Our Values





Vision

Our vision is for everyone with a physical disability to enjoy sport, physical and recreational activities on a fully inclusive basis in any environment.

Mission

To develop and promote sport, physical and recreational opportunities for people with a physical disability to reach their full potential.

Values

Fun: IWA-Sport's ethos is that having fun should be at the heart of everything we do.

Belonging: IWA-Sport is dedicated to fostering and instilling a sense of belonging and camaraderie through involvement in our programmes.

Empowerment: IWA-Sport believes that our members will be empowered to achieve greater independence, by building confidence and self determination, through involvement in our programmes.





Valuing Volunteers in IWA



Volunteers have played an integral part in the development of the Irish Wheelchair Association since its establishment in 1960. Volunteers contribute to IWA in a huge variety of roles – just some of them are shown above. IWA Volunteers support our members to enjoy equal rights, choices and opportunities in how they live their lives.

Three Year Goal

Irish Wheelchair Association is recognised as one of Ireland's best organisations to volunteer with. Volunteers are a thriving and impactful movement in Irish Wheelchair Association, measurably enhancing IWA's activities and services for the benefit of our members.

Strategic Objectives

1. Profile

Increase awareness, both within IWA and among the general public, of the work of the Association and the positive impact of volunteers on the lives of our members.

2. Infrastructure and Resources

Empower IWA volunteers to deliver standards of excellence in their contributions to the Association by providing them with dedicated supports and resources.

3. Advocacy

Increase the effectiveness of IWA advocacy campaigns by involving our volunteers, members and supporters to positively influence public policy and attitudes on issues impacting the lives of people with disabilities.

4. Services

Increase the range and quality of services we offer people with disabilities by engaging the skills, experience and energy of volunteers.

5. Communication and Engagement

Develop and improve communication and collaboration between volunteers, employees and members so that together we can contribute to the success of IWA.

6. Financial Sustainability

Support and inspire volunteers to contribute to the achievement of financial sustainability and resilience of IWA.

1. Profile

IWA Strategic Objective: Raise our profile so that IWA is recognised as Ireland's leading representative organisation and service provider for people with physical disabilities.

Volunteer Strategic Objective: Increase awareness, both within IWA and among the general public, of the work of the Association and the positive impact of volunteers on the lives of our members.

Actions	Metric	Timeline
Inform IWA volunteers of the ongoing work and achievements of the Association.	Quarterly news bulletin issued to Volunteer Branches and Sports Clubs.	Ongoing from Q1 2019
Promote the work of IWA through volunteer recruitment initiatives.	Record of recruitment initiatives, advertisements and participation in volunteer recruitment events.	Ongoing from Q1 2019
Highlight the impact of IWA volunteers in our communications and PR initiatives.	Annual report of volunteer impact stories, including measurement of press/publication mentions.	Annually
	Volunteer impact reported in IWA Annual Reports from 2019.	
Volunteer Branches, Sports Clubs and individual volunteers promote IWA branding guidelines and IWA key messages.	Branding and key messages toolkit created and implemented.	Q2 2019

2. Infrastructure & Resources

IWA Objective: With a focus on excellence, maximise efficiency and effectiveness of people, infrastructure, assets and resources.

Volunteer Strategic Objective: Empower IWA volunteers to deliver standards of excellence in their contributions to the Association by providing them with dedicated supports and resources.

Actions	Metric	Timeline
Build an effective I.T. CRM system to manage volunteer data.	A new comprehensive and accurate content management database is operational.	Q1 2019
Develop and support utilisation of a Sharepoint Portal for Volunteer Branches and Sports Clubs.	Volunteer Portal, providing resources and supports, available for use by all Branches and Sports Clubs	Q1 2019
Review the current IWA volunteer training programme, including the format, content and delivery methods.	Revised IWA training programme for volunteer roles, offering flexible and accessible learning solutions including e-learning and blended training.	Q1 2019
Achieve full implementation of the IWA Guidelines for the Recruitment, Selection and Management of Volunteers.	Quality audits showing 100% implementation of IWA Guidelines.	Q2 2019
Volunteer management training and supports provided to IWA service managers.	Record of training and support delivered.	Ongoing from Q1 2019
Develop a programme of volunteer appreciation and recognition activities.	Guidance document outlining appropriate methods and budgeting for volunteer appreciation and recognition activities.	Q1 2019
	IWA volunteer recognition and appreciation activities organised locally and nationally.	Annually
	Nominate IWA volunteers for external award programmes e.g. Volunteer Ireland Awards and Irish Charity Shop Association Awards.	Annually
	Records of volunteer appreciation and recognition activities maintained.	Ongoing from Q1 2019
	IWA Sports Volunteer Appreciation plan developed including review of IWA Sports Awards.	Q2 2019

3. Advocacy

IWA Objective: We advocate for the rights, choices, opportunities and independence of people with disabilities, to achieve international best standards of service provision and full social inclusion.

Volunteer Strategic Objective: Increase the effectiveness of IWA advocacy campaigns by involving our volunteers, members and supporters to positively influence public policy and attitudes on issues impacting the lives of people with disabilities.

Actions	Metrics	Timeline
Develop a Volunteer Role Description for an IWA Campaign Advocate.	Role Description created and registered with the Volunteer Department.	Q1 2019
Develop and provide relevant training for the volunteer advocate role.	Training programme created and implemented.	Q1 2019
Promote opportunities for IWA members, service-users and the wider public to become involved in advocacy role(s) in IWA.	Advocacy campaign volunteer role advertised on IWA website and via appropriate external routes (eg Volunteer Centres).	Q1 2019



4. Services

IWA Objective: IWA delivers a range of quality accredited services that meet the requirements of people with disabilities and that reflect, through a process of continuous improvement, international and sectoral standards of excellence.

Volunteer Strategic Objective: Increase the range and quality of services we offer people with disabilities by engaging the skills, experience and energy of volunteers.

Actions	Metrics	Timeline
Members and service-users will be regularly consulted to identify areas where volunteers could support their independence and personal development.	Questions included in IWA Customer Satisfaction Surveys and on Individual Information Forms.	Annually
	Volunteer involvement opportunities collated by the IWA Volunteer Department.	
Volunteer involvement opportunities across the Association are defined, collated and promoted.	Directorate business plans and individual service plans will include volunteer needs assessment, feasibility assessment and implementation plans.	Q1 2019 Quarterly updates thereafter.
	IWA Volunteer Branch Annual Activity Plans filed with the Volunteer Department.	Ongoing from Q1 2019
	Identified volunteer opportunities advertised on dedicated section of IWA websites and social media accounts.	
	IWA Volunteer opportunities advertised in local communities nationally (e.g. Volunteer Centres).	

4. Services (Continued)

IWA Objective: IWA delivers a range of quality accredited services that meet the requirements of people with disabilities and that reflect, through a process of continuous improvement, international and sectoral standards of excellence.

Volunteer Strategic Objective: Increase the range and quality of services we offer people with disabilities by engaging the skills, experience and energy of volunteers.

Actions	Metrics	Timeline
Research and apply for funding and sponsorship to develop volunteer programmes for identified un-met needs of IWA members.	Record of funding applications and outcomes.	Ongoing from Q1 2019
Support IWA Volunteer Branches and Sports Clubs to operate to standards of excellence in line with IWA Volunteer Branch Bye-Laws, IWA Sports Standing Orders, IWA Policies and Procedures, and best practice standards for the sector.	Annual Reviews of all IWA Volunteer Branches and Sport Clubs - identifying examples of excellence and areas where targeted support is required.	Q4 2019
	A Development Action Plan is in place for each IWA Volunteer Branch.	
	IWA Club Awards for Sports Clubs.	
	IWA publications to feature achievements and examples of best practice in IWA Volunteer Branches and Sports Clubs.	

5. Communication & Engagement

IWA Objective: People are at the centre of everything we do. We value and prioritise communications with staff, members, volunteers and customers, to enable and empower everyone to contribute directly to the success of IWA.

Volunteer Strategic Objective: Develop and improve communication and collaboration between volunteers, employees and members so that together we can contribute to the success of IWA.

Actions	Metrics	Timeline
Improve communications with and among IWA volunteers.	Volunteer Programme Communications Plan developed and implemented.	Q1 2019
	IWA Volunteer Branch and Sports Club portal on Sharepoint developed.	
	IWA Volunteer Branch regional support meetings taking place at least twice a year.	
	Enhanced Volunteer Section of IWA Website.	
Review effectiveness of IWA National Sports Council.	Report and recommendations developed.	Q4 2019
Achieve external quality assurance accreditation for the IWA Volunteer Programme.	IWA quality standards for volunteers in place across the organisation.	Q1 2019
	External quality assurance accreditation achieved.	Q4 2021

5. Financial Sustainability

IWA Strategic Objective: Ensure IWA long term financial sustainability and resilience.

Volunteer Strategic Objective: Support and inspire volunteers to contribute to the achievement of financial sustainability and resilience of IWA.

Actions	Metrics	Timeline
Develop a fundraising volunteer recruitment and involvement plan as part of IWA's overall fundraising and income generating strategy.	8% year-on-year increase in the number of fundraising volunteers.	Annually
Increase the involvement of corporate volunteers contributing to the financial sustainability of IWA	15% increase in the numbers of corporate volunteers involved in IWA.	Q4 2021
Research and apply for sponsorship and funding to support IWA's volunteer programme.	Record of applications and outcomes.	Annually
Provide fundraising volunteers with relevant information about the financial status of IWA and the impact of their fundraising activities.	Summary statement about IWA's finances is available to fundraising volunteers.	Ongoing
	Fundraising volunteers are systematically thanked and informed of the impact of their involvement.	
The volunteer programme will be regularly evaluated to ensure a positive investment-to-value ratio.	The VIVA (Volunteer Investment and Value Audit Tool) will show an increasing positive ratio over the 3 years of the Strategy.	Annually

Implementation of the IWA Volunteer Strategy 2019 - 2021

The IWA Volunteer Strategy was approved and adopted by the IWA Senior Management Team on 13th November 2018, and the IWA Board of Directors on 7th December 2018.

Business Planning

The IWA Volunteer Strategy 2019 - 2021 will be incorporated into individual IWA Directorate Annual Business plans 2019, 2020, and 2021, with actions and metrics.

Regular progress reviews will be managed by each Director and the National Volunteer Programme Manager to ensure the Strategy is fully and successfully implemented.

The overall implementation of the Strategy will be overseen by the National Director with responsibility for Volunteering.

Monitoring

Quarterly progress updates will be collated by the National Volunteer Programme Manager, reporting to the National Director of Volunteering.

An annual implementation progress report will be delivered to the IWA Senior Management Team and made available to stakeholders.

Budget and Finances

From Q1 2019, the financial value and impact of volunteering in IWA will be monitored by utilising "VIVA – The Volunteer Investment and Value Audit". This is a toolkit developed by the Institute for Volunteering Research which is widely used to measure the economic impact of volunteering within an organisation. It uses a simple equation to calculate the difference between the monetary investment into a volunteering programme and the value of the work carried out by volunteers.

It is an objective of this IWA Volunteer Strategy to increase the VIVA ratio of our volunteer programme from its baseline in 2019 throughout the period of the implementation to 2021.

It is envisaged that this budget will be relative to the number of volunteers, the value of their contribution of the service and current financial circumstances of the Association.

Volunteering requires investment and it is the responsibility of each IWA service manager to allocate an annual budget for the recruitment, selection and management of volunteers in their respective services. The Volunteer Department will allocate an annual budget to support the implementation of national activities as outlined in this Volunteer Strategy.

Acknowledgements

Volunteer Strategy Steering Group

Fiona Cunnane, National Volunteer Programme Manager (Chair)

Tony Cunningham, National Director of Volunteering

Julian Mahady, Service Support Officer, Volunteering and Property

Claire Sheridan, HR Operations Team Lead

Paul Reck, Retail Manager

Shauna Geraghty Cahill, National Community Supports Directorate Project Officer

Martin Kelly, Regional Trainer

Jimmy Byrne, IWA Volunteer

Eileen O'Mahony, IWA President and Voluntary Board Member

Auveen Wilson, IWA Sport Administrator

Ross Young, ICT Business Applications Lead

Charlene Hurley, National Fundraising Manager

The IWA Volunteer Department thanks everyone who contributed to the development of this volunteer strategy including:

Volunteer Ireland, the national volunteer development agency

Linda Keane, Ability West

Noreen McGarry, Western Care

Shane Mulchrone, Business in the Community

Gabrielle Sheehan, Alcon

IWA volunteers, staff and members who participated in the consultation process.

Appendix 1

Development Process of the IWA Volunteer Strategy 2019 – 2021

IWA was founded by on a voluntary basis by wheelchair users in 1960 and has since then become one of Ireland's largest voluntary organisations working with and on behalf of people with physical disabilities. In 2018, in response to the radically changed environment in which IWA operates, and to advance the organisational standard of continuous quality improvement, IWA commenced a process to develop a Volunteer Strategy for the organisation.

Volunteer Impact Assessment

To establish a baseline picture of the current status of volunteering in IWA, Volunteer Ireland was engaged, in February and March 2018, to carry out a Volunteer Impact Assessment utilising the Volunteer Impact Assessment Toolkit developed by the Institute for Volunteering Research in the UK. This process involved:

- Invitation to participate in an online survey issued to approximately:
 - 2,000 members
 - 460 volunteers
 - 1,000 employees

A total of 316 responses were received

- Two focus groups held in Dublin and Tralee which involved:
 - 18 employees
 - 8 members
 - 10 volunteers

Volunteer Ireland's Volunteer Impact Assessment Report of IWA, April 2018, provides a picture of IWA as an organisation that values volunteers and one where volunteers enjoy sharing their time. It is a place where they can develop new skills and enhance their wellbeing across a range of social and cultural capital measures. IWA members and employees reported positively on the value of engaging with volunteers.

The IWA Volunteer Impact Assessment Report also noted a number of areas for further investigation and made recommendations for advancing continuous quality improvement of volunteering in IWA.

In June 2018, following consideration of these recommendations, the IWA Senior Management Team agreed to support a process to develop a Volunteer Strategy for the Association. A Volunteer Strategy Steering Group was established, its membership representing a range of internal stakeholders in IWA. The Steering Group's main responsibility was to provide guidance and ensure full engagement with all aspects of the organisation.

Development of Strategic Objectives and Actions

In July and August 2018, a variety of consultations took place with members, volunteers and employees with the aim of shaping the future of volunteering in IWA. These consultations included:

- Seven focus group meetings facilitated in:
 - Tuam, Co Galway
 - Athlone, Co Westmeath
 - Carlow Town (two sessions)
 - Ardee, Co Louth
 - Tipperary Town
 - Clontarf, Dublin

In total, the focus group sessions involved 44 volunteers (Volunteer Branches, Shops, Resource and Outreach Centre services, Sports Clubs, and Fundraising), 14 employees, 9 members.

- Four consultations at Community Services Directorate regional team meetings
- Telephone interviews with:
 - Corporate volunteer representative
 - Two disability organisations
 - Two voluntary sector infrastructure organisations

This consultation process helped to further identify the key priorities for developing volunteering in IWA over the next three year period, 2019 -2021. These identified priorities and action points were set out in a Draft Volunteer Strategy, which was circulated to all internal stakeholders in September 2018 for review.

The layout and structure of the IWA Volunteer Strategy maps onto the overall IWA Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020, so that it is clear to all how IWA's volunteer involvement will progress the organisation's key development objectives and actions.

IWA Volunteer Strategy Development Process



Senior Management Team - Review of Volunteer Impact Assessment Report
SMT Agreement To Create a IWA Volunteer Strategy



Volunteer Strategy Steering Group Established



Focus Group Consultations (members, volunteers, employees)
Interviews (Key personnel, external stakeholders)



Draft Strategy Circulated to Stakeholders for Review and Input



Final Draft Strategy Approved
For Integration into Directorate Business Plans 2019, 2020, 2021



Appendix 2

Voluntary Activity in Ireland – General Trends and Issues

Profile of Volunteering in Ireland

Ireland is a country characterised by a high level of community and voluntary activity. The Central Statistics Office [Quarterly National Household Survey, Volunteering and Wellbeing, Q3, 2013] reports that well over a quarter of the Irish population is involved in some form of volunteering. The CSO estimated that this contribution is worth over €2 billion annually.

Behind this positive headline however, there are some interesting features to the current state of volunteering in Ireland. 65% of the hours volunteered were provided by people aged over 45 years of age and those who volunteered the least number of hours were in the 15 to 24 age group (6.9% of hours).

However, in a report published by Volunteer Ireland in 2018 [Rural Volunteerism: Impacting Development and Sustainability], it was found that in rural communities, there was a less dramatic difference in the age profile of volunteers with 34% of rural volunteers being from the 18 to 25 age bracket and over 59% in the 25 to 64 age group.

While there may be a general perception that volunteering is an activity that may be more attractive to people who are not in paid employment, the CSO found that nearly half volunteering hours in Ireland are provided by employed persons (48.3%) Those who were unemployed provided 8.3% of all volunteer hours. The Rural Volunteerism: Impacting Development and Sustainability report similarly found that 65% of rural volunteers were working locally.

If volunteering is an activity that is primarily engaged in by older, employed volunteers, then this has implications for how organisations, such as IWA, engage with volunteers, and the strategies put in place to encourage the involvement of individuals who do not fit this profile.

The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) published Lending a Hand – Young People and Volunteering in November 2011, which noted that “engaging in volunteering at an early age would also appear to increase the likelihood of a person either continuing to volunteer for the long term, or returning to it after a period of absence.”

The NYCI found that young people were more likely to become a volunteer when they had a personal connection to the cause, and in response to a direct ask to get involved.

Volunteer Ireland’s statistics over recent years demonstrate a growing number of young people registering to volunteer, and that their main recruitment method was via the internet (50% of registrations) followed by word of mouth referrals (15% of registrations). [Source: I-VOL, the national volunteer database managed by Volunteer Ireland.]

Policy and Regulatory Issues

The policy and regulatory environment in which IWA operates has undergone a period of rapid change. The Wheel, Ireland's representative organisation for charities and the voluntary sector, notes on its website (www.wheel.ie) that charity regulation in Ireland is a rapidly changing landscape.

Over recent years, new legislation and regulatory obligations have come into effect, such as the Charities Act, the Companies Act, the General Data Protection Regulations, the Register of Lobbying, Garda Vetting legislation etc. Furthermore, IWA's primary funder, the HSE, has specific compliance requirements, and the organisation must implement the standard requirements for Health and Safety, Employment Law, Adult and Child Safeguarding, etc.

The HSE has also published a number of key policy documents – Time to Move on from Congregated Settings, 2011 and New Directions – which set out an approach for disability services that envisages people with disabilities having a wide choice of options and local community supports, moving away from the out-dated model of institutional care that was typical of disability services in Ireland for many years.

This changed regulatory environment affects volunteerism, with anecdotal feedback provided to IWA that many of the organisation's longer term volunteers find it challenging to adapt to this compliance burden.

IWA is committed to a process of continuous quality improvement and has invested considerable resources into ensuring that the high standards now expected of voluntary organisations are upheld in IWA. The current IWA Strategic Plan, 2017 – 2020, places "excellence" as one of its core values and embedding a "culture of quality" is a key aim of the IWA Quality Policy.

Volunteering in IWA must be supported to achieve the same high standards as are expected of all areas of the organisation, while also taking cognisance of the impact and challenge this may place on volunteers personally.

This Volunteer Strategy aims to address these challenges, setting out a framework to bring about continuous improvement in a realistic and achievable way.

Appendix 3: IWA Sport Strategy 20/20

Vision

Our vision is for everyone with a physical disability to enjoy sport, physical and recreational activities on a fully inclusive basis in any environment.

Mission

To develop and promote sport, physical and recreational opportunities for people with a physical disability to reach their full potential.

3 Year Goal

Irish Wheelchair Association-Sport is recognised as Ireland's leading organisation for people with physical disabilities. We are a thriving NGB, facilitating, advocating and promoting inclusion in the sporting environment, both recreational and competitive, through a programme of quality events and activities.

Growth Areas:

1. Growth and Development

To grow and develop to ensure we continue as the leading physical disability National Governing Body in Ireland.

2. High Performance

To support our athletes, teams and coaches to compete and perform for Ireland at the highest international level.

3. Technical Development and Education

To develop and provide technical information about our sports and inclusive practises. Support and increase the quality and quantity of our coaches, officials and volunteers.

4. Business Operations

To develop best practise strategic governance and operational management practises to ensure efficient, effective and innovative leadership.



**To all our valued IWA volunteers,
volunteer support persons
and managers**

*We thank you for your
interest and commitment to
furthering the work of IWA*



Áras Chúchulainn
Blackheath Drive
Clontarf, Dublin 3
D03 AW62

T 01 818 6400

F 01 833 3873

E info@iwa.ie

Company Registration No 352483.
Charity Regulatory Authority CRA 20007997
Registered Charity No CHY 5393



www.iwa.ie

