

Measuring the value of volunteering⁴⁵

Many services and organisations find it helpful to put a financial value on the time contributed by volunteers.

Total volunteer investment

You will need to begin by adding up all the costs associated with having volunteers.

Use figures for a year, either from your budget or last year's accounts. Estimate the cost if the actual figure is not available.

The self-help guide gives you a list of expenditure to include.

Total volunteer value

VIVA analyses the work undertaken by volunteers and for how long, matches it to equivalent paid work and applies a market rate.

For national rates of earnings, see www.ons.gov.org.uk and search for "gross weekly earnings by occupation". This is updated every 3 months. Alternatively you could use your organisation's pay scales.

For people who volunteer less than once per week it may be easier to estimate their annual hours and use this figure.

Do not add in money which has been fundraised by volunteers. The sole purpose of VIVA is to calculate the economic value of the time volunteers have contributed.

Greater London Volunteering and NCVO will advise on how to calculate this.

A much simpler method is to total all the volunteer hours that have been contributed in a year and multiply this by the national minimum wage. This gives a lower and less accurate figure, but gives you absolute assurance that you are not overstating the financial value of volunteering in your service.



Top Tip

Greater London Volunteering measures economic value of volunteer hours at £13 per hour

Overheads

Once you have calculated the total annual volunteer value, you can add an additional percentage to cover what you would have spent on overheads (i.e. National Insurance, annual leave, sick pay, etc) if these people had been paid staff rather than volunteers. Your organisation may have a standard figure you can use. If not, a very conservative figure would be to add 20%

