

Tools and Methods

Volunteer Guidance

Austria 2021



PART 1 TOOL SUMMARY

Tool/method name	Volunteer Guidance
Tool/method summary description	In Wiener Hilfswerk when volunteers want to join the neighborhood center, they find, in each of the centers, a delegated member of staff that will guide them in 1 to 1 session following a pre-structured set of guidelines.
Country observed	Austria
Year observed	2021
Programme area	Volunteers' involvement, Empowerment, Active Citizenship, Retention of Interest, Recognition of own Strengths and Skills, Provision for the Community
Tool type	Facilitation Technique Guidelines
Specific topic:	Involve volunteers through recognising and highlighting own strengths and interest to facilitate the work of the Neighborhood Centers but also empower themselves to take an active role in the community
Beneficiaries of tool:	Any member of the Society that wishes to Volunteer. Including a great majority of former visitors of the Neighborhood Centers that wish to give back to the community.
Can this tool be applied to other beneficiaries: yes/no	It can be applied to any kind of volunteers
What type of beneficiaries: ALL, or specific ones?	ALL over 14 years old
If specific ones, which?	Non-Specific

PART 2 MORE INFORMATION

Tool full description:

In Wiener Hilfswerk when volunteers want to join the neighborhood center, they find, in each of the centers, a delegated member of staff that will guide them in one-to-one sessions on:

- What neighborhood centers do so far.
- How volunteers can contribute.
- Figure out the motivation and strengths of the individual volunteer.

They then structure an official volunteer process to get to know each other, to know where the volunteer would be and feel useful.

The focus of the process is highlighting the personal strengths and the meaning to the community.

Context:

Volunteers are the cornerstone of the Wiener Hilfswerk Neighborhood Centers and as such they are deeply valued both for their willingness to help but also for their own specific skills, strengths, and interests. As such the personalised guidance provided from a specified and delegated member of staff is essential not only, to enforce the optimal provision of practice but to retain motivation in volunteering and being an active citizen through processes that deeply align with one's personal experiences and competences.

Could it be used in other contexts? If yes, which ones?

This is generally a methodology that can be implemented in any kind of organisation or initiative that involves volunteer involvement.

What is innovative about this method or tool?

The fact that the volunteers are not seen only as helping hand but as initiators of practices, igniters of processes and official members of the Wiener Hilfswerk, with essential input in multiple levels of activation, while giving them time to evolve. The method is further enforced by the cooperation of the Wiener Hilfswerk with other partners that work on volunteer training and recruitment.

Detailed Methodology:

The study visit observed how the Wiener Hilfswerk association manages to recognise in depth, using the tool that can be found in the link below, volunteers' motivation and relate it to the activities of the Neighborhood Centers, while also empowering them to recognise unseen capabilities and enhance their strengths.

The point of the tool is to facilitate the processes that have been designed for bridging the gap between staff member and volunteers and include:

- Focus on acknowledging the specific input of each volunteer to the cause
- Educational programmes that the volunteers could attend
- External supervision and support in terms of technical, psychological, and mental needs of each individual volunteer

Specific advice for staff/volunteers/adult educators:

- Having a trial period can be extremely helpful to really recognise the topic that a volunteer can work with.
- Provide chances for enhancing professionalisation of the volunteers that may seek a line of work that is similar to what they learn and provide through the organisation
- Host Social Events that promote the notion that the volunteers are a constituent part of the organisation.
- Keep Communication Open.
- Encourage new ideas and initiatives.

[Here](#) is the [link](#) to the tool on which the is based on.