

Set 2

InfoSheet 2.8

Recruitment and Selection

Increasing the Diversity of your Volunteers

Why do we need to aim for a diverse range of volunteers?

The population is changing and organisations need to reflect people's increasing diversity to be relevant and effective. By recognising and accommodating difference, organisations can ensure they meet individual needs.

Britain is a multi-cultural society and your service will need to reflect the needs of the entire population in order to remain effective and relevant. In addition, you will need to comply with current legislation in relation to equal opportunities (see *InfoSheet 2.3* Equal Opportunities Policy – Why is it so important?).

By incorporating diversity you will present a more welcoming face to volunteers, client groups and the general public; be more representative of our wider society and be more able to respond to the needs of your local community. You will benefit from the new ideas and fresh approaches being generated by people from different backgrounds, cultures, genders, ages and outlooks and attract more customers and service users (Diversity Challenge Website - www.diversitchallenge.org).

How can we ensure we are reaching volunteers from different cultural backgrounds, of different ages and lifestyles and people with disabilities?

Organisations that are successful in attracting volunteers usually under-represented in formal volunteering (younger people, older people, unemployed people, disabled people and people from black and ethnic minority communities) adopt a range of approaches, including:

- Paying out-of-pocket expenses.
- Offering a variety of different types of volunteering opportunities requiring various levels of skill and commitment.
- Organising transport where necessary.
- Ensuring that buildings have full disabled access.
- Making it clear in recruitment literature that volunteering is open to all.
- Targeting recruitment campaigns at the specific group they want to recruit.
- Adopting non-rejection policies for people who want to volunteer and linking volunteers into alternative opportunities.
- Employing a diverse paid staff group, thereby illustrating to potential volunteers that the organisation is committed to equal opportunities.
- Providing appropriate training and support.

Source: The National Centre for Volunteering, A Route to Opportunity.

Diversity Challenge

The diversity challenge website provides a step by step guide towards the diversity goal, with handy tools to get you there, including an interactive questionnaire, action plans, answers to frequently asked questions and a pool of inspiration for you to dip into and contains a Tool Kit to enable you to work towards increasing diversity - see the *Diversity Challenge Website* www.diversitchallenge.org