

HANDBOOK OF BEST PRACTICES

BE A VOLUNTEER!





PREFACE

The inclusion of people with disabilities in volunteering is a fundamental goal for building a fairer, more compassionate, and accessible society for all. This manual stems from the experience and research work carried out within the framework of the European project **Be a Volunteer! 2023-2-HU01-KA220-YOU-000170369**, which brought together several international partners united by the shared goal of promoting good practices and models of inclusive participation.

The journey leading to the creation of this document was marked by open dialogue between diverse perspectives, an in-depth analysis of the challenges and opportunities volunteering offers to people with disabilities, and the collection of concrete experiences that show inclusion is not only possible, but adds genuine value to the entire community.

Within these pages, you will find tools, strategies, and testimonials that can inspire organizations, volunteers, and professionals to make their work more accessible and welcoming. We hope that this manual will serve not only as a practical guide but also as an encouragement to strengthen the culture of inclusion, so that every individual – regardless of ability – can find in volunteering an opportunity for growth, connection, and active participation.

Happy reading!



BALLCLUSION

Enhancing social inclusion of visually impaired individuals through football

Organisation Name:

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Project Website:

<https://activezoneoutdoor.cy/ballclusion>

Country:

Cyprus

Region of Impact:

Piacere Sports Club, Larnaca region, Aradippou district, Cyprus



Description

The **BallClusion** initiative provides visually impaired persons (VIPs) with the opportunity to actively participate in sports and outdoor activities, focusing on football as a tool for social inclusion.

During the program, visually impaired and non-visually impaired individuals come together to take part in:

- **Blind Football Training Sessions:** Guided by professional coaches and volunteers, participants learn adapted football techniques using sound-emitting balls and other assistive tools.
- **Awareness Workshops:** Led by experts and volunteers, these workshops inform participants about the challenges faced by VIPs and the adaptations needed to create inclusive environments.
- **Open Football Days:** Community members, including VIPs and non-VIPs, participate in open sessions to practice and enjoy football together, breaking stereotypes and building empathy.

Volunteers play a critical role in the program. They assist with setting up equipment, guiding VIP participants, providing moral support, and ensuring a smooth and safe environment for all activities. Through their involvement, volunteers gain firsthand experience working with VIPs, develop empathy and teamwork skills, and contribute to fostering a more inclusive society.

Necessary Resources

Key resources include:

- **Human Resources:** Coaches, trainers, and volunteers to facilitate activities, guide participants, and create an inclusive environment.
- **Equipment:** Sound-emitting balls, training spaces, blindfolds, vests, and protective gear.
- **Funding:** Provided by the European Solidarity Corps of the European Union.

Volunteers are essential resources as they assist in preparing the sessions, guiding VIP participants, and supporting communication between all parties.

Evolution of the Practice

BallClusion activities include:

1. **Blind Football Training:** Regular sessions every first and third Friday of the month in 2021 and 2022.
2. **Awareness Workshops:** Volunteers and participants engage in discussions to understand the challenges VIPs face and share strategies for overcoming them.
3. **Open Football Days:** Held monthly, these events encourage community involvement and allow participants to practice inclusivity in action.

Volunteers actively contribute to the workshops and training sessions by sharing their experiences, encouraging participants, and acting as role models for inclusivity.

Impact on Skill Development

The program enhances skills for all participants:

- **For VIPs:** Increases spatial awareness, confidence, and the ability to collaborate with non-VIPs.
- **For Non-VIPs and Volunteers:** Improves empathy, adaptability, and non-visual senses.
- **For Professionals:** Develops expertise in inclusive coaching and working with VIPs.

Volunteers gain valuable skills, including teamwork, communication, and problem-solving, as they learn to support VIPs effectively.

Success and Innovation

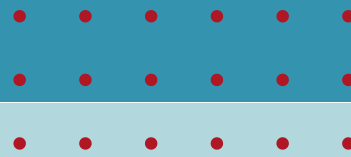


BallClusion stands out for its innovative approach of integrating VIPs and non-VIPs through football. By involving volunteers in every aspect of the program, it fosters collaboration, challenges stereotypes, and creates an inclusive sports environment. The necessity to adapt equipment and methods also drives innovation in inclusive sports.

Replicability



The practice is highly replicable. By engaging local stakeholders, training volunteers, and providing the necessary equipment, the program can be adapted to different contexts. Volunteers are critical to its success, as their involvement ensures a supportive and inclusive environment for participants.



Sustainability

BallClusion is sustainable due to its focus on community involvement and volunteer training. The program's long-term goal is to establish blind football teams and tournaments, raising awareness and expanding opportunities for VIPs. Trained volunteers and professionals ensure continuity and scalability of the initiative.



Impact on Target Groups

The program has had a profound impact:

- **On VIPs:** Provides opportunities to engage in sports, improves self-confidence, and enhances social inclusion.
- **On Volunteers:** Builds skills, fosters empathy, and allows them to contribute to breaking barriers.
- **On the Community:** Promotes awareness, inclusivity, and collaboration, demonstrating the benefits of inclusive sports and volunteering.

Target Groups

The project targets individuals of all ages and genders, with a primary focus on young people. Both VIPs and non-VIPs participate, with volunteers acting as facilitators, guides, and supporters throughout the sessions.



BALLCLUSION

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DARE**DisAble the BarRiErs****Organisation Name:**

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Project Website:

<https://kreisau.de/en/education/inclusion/dare-disable-the-barriers/>

Country:

Germany, Greece, Italy,
Poland

Region of Impact:

Dresden (Germany),
Larissa (Greece), Pisa (Italy),
Rzeszow (Poland)

**Description**

The **DARE** initiative focuses on removing barriers for young people with visual, hearing, or physical impairments by creating an inclusive e-learning platform. This platform connects youth workers, trainers, educators, and NGOs with young people with disabilities, enabling them to access inclusive volunteering opportunities in EU-funded programs. **During the program:**

- **Young people with disabilities** are supported in identifying and applying for suitable volunteering opportunities, enhancing their active participation in local and EU projects.
- **Youth workers and trainers** receive training in adapting their practices to be more inclusive and effective for young people with disabilities.
- **Volunteers** play a critical role by facilitating access, providing peer support, and assisting in creating an inclusive environment.

The program features a **Truth and DARE space**, an interactive e-learning environment where participants can access training materials and engage with inspiring resources. Additionally, the DARE platform empowers disabled participants to become "DARE ambassadors," encouraging others to join volunteering and community initiatives.

Necessary Resources**Key resources include:**

- **Human Resources:** Professionals experienced in supporting individuals with disabilities, IT specialists for platform development, and volunteers to assist with program activities.
- **Educational Materials:** Inclusive training resources for youth workers and participants.
- **IT Infrastructure:** Development of the e-learning platform and mobile application.

Volunteers contribute by assisting with accessibility measures, providing peer mentorship, and facilitating communication between participants and program organizers.

Evolution of the Practice

The **DARE** initiative has developed several innovative tools:

1. **Digital Storytelling Handbook of Empowerment:** A resource for personal and community development.
2. **Truth and DARE Online Space:** A platform for interactive, inclusive learning.
3. **DARE Mobile App:** Facilitating access to volunteering opportunities and resources.

These tools have been implemented in multiple locations, fostering an inclusive culture across diverse regions.

Impact on Skill Development

The **DARE** initiative enhances the skills of participants and youth workers alike:

- **For Young People with Disabilities:** Improves communication, leadership, technical skills, and social integration. Participation in volunteering opportunities fosters confidence and adaptability.
- **For Youth Workers:** Develops empathy, innovation, and inclusive facilitation skills.
- **For Volunteers:** Builds teamwork, problem-solving, and mentoring skills, contributing to their personal and professional growth.

Success and Innovation

The **DARE** initiative addresses a critical gap in the youth sector by providing tailored tools for disabled young people to engage in volunteering and mobility projects. **Its innovative approach includes:**

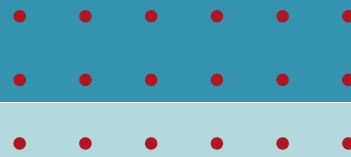


- A specialized **e-learning** platform offering inclusive training resources.
- Opportunities for disabled participants to become **DARE ambassadors**, empowering their peers to engage in community activities.
- Volunteers who act as facilitators, bridging gaps between participants and organizations, and ensuring the inclusivity of activities.

Replicability

The **DARE** model is highly replicable in various sectors, including education, healthcare, and community services. By engaging stakeholders, providing training, and leveraging volunteers, the program can be adapted to meet the needs of diverse communities and countries.





Sustainability

While some results of the initiative require ongoing financial support, the involvement of volunteers and the creation of a strong community network contribute to its sustainability. The platform's long-term success depends on continued funding and active engagement from stakeholders and volunteers.



Impact on Target Groups

The **DARE** initiative has significantly impacted its target groups by:

- Providing young people with disabilities access to volunteering and mobility projects, enhancing their social inclusion and skill development.
- Empowering youth workers and volunteers with the tools and knowledge to create more inclusive environments.
- Expanding the reach of EU-funded programs to disabled young people, fostering a more equitable and inclusive community.

Target Groups

The program targets a wide range of individuals and organizations, including:

- Youth workers, youth organizations, trainers, and educators.
- Organizations with a Quality Label within the Corps program.
- Young people, particularly those with visual, hearing, and physical impairments.

Volunteers are integral to supporting these groups by ensuring accessible opportunities and promoting inclusivity.



DARE -
DisAble the BarRiErs

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RECIPE FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND INCLUSION

Recept za trajnost in vključenost

Organisation Name:

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Country:

Slovenia

Region of Impact:

Ljubljana



Description

The "Recipe for Sustainability and Inclusion" project empowers young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities through a series of hands-on and social activities aimed at fostering independence, building practical skills, and promoting inclusion. **During the program:**

- **Cooking Workshops:** Participants learn food preparation techniques and kitchen safety with guidance from trained staff and volunteers, developing practical skills for daily life.
- **Social Skill-Building Activities:** Group activities encourage communication, teamwork, and collaboration, helping participants build confidence in social settings.
- **Digital Literacy Training:** Participants are introduced to essential digital tools and platforms, including those used to create a digital recipe book, which enhances their adaptability and independence in a digital world.
- **Sustainability Education:** Workshops on recycling and eco-friendly practices teach participants to adopt a responsible approach to the environment.
- **Cultural Exchange:** Interaction with individuals from diverse backgrounds broadens participants' cultural awareness and adaptability.

Volunteers play a pivotal role in the program by supporting participants in workshops, fostering an inclusive environment, and assisting with accessibility and communication. Their involvement not only enriches the learning experience but also promotes a sense of community and shared responsibility.

Necessary Resources

To achieve its goals, the project utilized:

- **Human Resources:** Trained staff and volunteers skilled in disability support, cooking instruction, and digital literacy.
- **Financial Resources:** Funding for staff salaries, materials, and equipment.
- **Cooking Equipment and Ingredients:** Necessary for conducting workshops and developing practical skills.
- **Digital Tools and Platforms:** Used to create and share the recipe book and facilitate communication.
- **Partnerships and Collaborations:** With local organizations and stakeholders for resource sharing and expertise.
- **Accessible Materials:** Both print and digital materials tailored to meet the needs of participants with disabilities.

Volunteers were integral to the project's success, assisting participants during activities, promoting inclusivity, and supporting digital literacy training.

Evolution of the Practice

The project developed a digital recipe book in Slovenian, which is accessible to the public and serves as a resource for promoting sustainable cooking practices. The book has been widely disseminated and used beyond the project's initial scope.



Impact on Skill Development

The project had a profound impact on skill development for young people with disabilities:

- **Practical Skills:** Cooking workshops enhanced fine motor skills, work habits, and employability.
- **Digital Competencies:** Participants gained experience with digital tools through the creation of the recipe book.
- **Social-Emotional Skills:** Activities fostered communication, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities.
- **Cultural Competencies:** Interactions with diverse individuals improved intercultural communication and adaptability.
- **Sustainability Awareness:** Participants learned about eco-friendly practices, encouraging responsible environmental behavior.

Volunteers also benefited, developing skills in mentoring, inclusivity, and teamwork while supporting participants in various project activities.

Success and Innovation

The project is innovative and impactful because it combines practical skill-building with social inclusion and sustainability education.

Its unique features include:

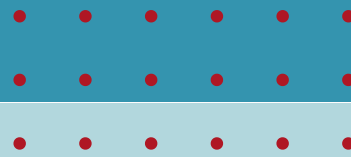


- A **participant-centered approach**, tailoring activities to the needs and interests of young people with disabilities.
- The use of **digital tools** to create a lasting resource (the recipe book) that promotes sustainable practices.
- Active **volunteer engagement**, which fosters community support and strengthens the project's impact.
- A strong focus on **environmental sustainability**, teaching participants to incorporate green practices into their daily lives.

Replicability



This practice is easily replicable, as it relies on universally applicable principles of inclusivity, skill-building, and sustainability. By engaging volunteers, securing partnerships, and adapting resources, similar projects can be implemented in various contexts and regions.



Sustainability

The project ensures long-term sustainability by:



1. Digital Storytelling Handbook Building **participants' skills** in cooking, digital literacy, and environmental practices that they can continue to use in their daily lives.
2. Establishing **local partnerships** and community collaborations to maintain ongoing support and resources.
3. Producing a **digital recipe book** that remains accessible for future use, promoting sustainable cooking practices.
4. Encouraging volunteers and stakeholders to take ownership of the project's goals and continue its activities.



Impact on Target Groups

The project had a significant impact on its target groups by:

- Empowering young people with disabilities to gain independence, confidence, and practical skills.
- Increasing awareness of sustainable living and healthy lifestyle practices.
- Providing a platform for **socialization and community building**, fostering inclusion and acceptance.
- Enhancing volunteers' skills and fostering empathy and collaboration within the community.

Target Groups

The program targeted young people with intellectual disabilities and associated disorders, as well as their peers, families, association members, and the wider community.

Volunteers, staff, and local stakeholders were also actively involved, ensuring a holistic approach to inclusion and support.



RECIPE FOR
SUSTAINABILITY
AND INCLUSION

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SOLIDARITY COFFEE

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Project Website:

[Jaunuolių Dienos Centras – Solidarity Coffee](#)

Country:

Lithuania

Region of Impact:

Panevėžys



Description

The **Solidarity Coffee** project, initiated by Jaunuolių Dienos Centras, operates as a mobile café run by young people with intellectual disabilities in Panevėžys, Lithuania. The project provides participants with hands-on experience in customer service, coffee preparation, and operating café equipment, all while fostering meaningful connections with the local community.

During the program:

- **Participants work as baristas**, preparing coffee, serving customers, and maintaining the café.
- **Volunteers and support staff** assist with training and ensuring a welcoming environment for all customers.
- **Workshops and events** are held to engage the public and promote inclusivity, fostering conversations about equal opportunities over a cup of coffee.
- **Participants learn additional skills**, such as menu design, managing reservations, and public event coordination.

The project's primary goal is to provide real-life work experience while challenging societal prejudices. By encouraging interaction between participants and the public, Solidarity Coffee promotes understanding, breaks stereotypes, and highlights the abilities of individuals with disabilities in a supportive, real-world setting.

Necessary Resources

To implement the project, the following resources were required:

- **Skilled Trainers and Support Staff:** To train participants in coffee-making, customer service, and café operations.
- **Mobile Café Equipment:** Including coffee carts, brewing machines, cups, and utensils.
- **Financial Support:** Provided by the European Solidarity Corps to cover equipment, staff salaries, and operational costs.
- **Volunteers:** Integral in mentoring participants, assisting during events, and promoting community engagement.
- **Event Spaces:** Locations for hosting pop-up café events, such as festivals, schools, and community gatherings.

Evolution of the Practice

The project was launched in 2019 and has since grown into a recurring initiative, replicated four times in Panevėžys. Participants expanded their roles to include managing reservations, designing menus, and hosting events at public festivals, schools, and other venues. Over time, the project became a symbol of inclusivity, fostering empathy and solidarity within the community.

Its success inspired continued implementation and adaptation, creating a sustainable model for social integration.

Impact on Skill Development

Solidarity Coffee has had a significant impact on skill development for participants:

- **Technical Skills:** Coffee preparation, equipment handling, and customer service.
- **Interpersonal Skills:** Communication, teamwork, and public engagement.
- **Practical Skills:** Menu design, event management, and problem-solving.
- **Self-Confidence and Independence:** Meaningful work builds self-esteem and empowers participants to contribute actively to society.

Volunteers also gained valuable mentoring and teamwork experience, enhancing their understanding of inclusivity and disability awareness.

Success and Innovation

The project's innovation lies in its approach to inclusivity through a universally accessible medium: coffee. By combining a familiar and enjoyable activity with a profound social mission, **Solidarity Coffee** reaches a broad audience and promotes equality in a relatable way. **Key aspects of success include:**

- **Visibility of Inclusivity:** Participants serve as visible examples of the abilities of individuals with disabilities, challenging societal stereotypes.
- **Community Engagement:** Encouraging dialogue and interaction through a mobile café setting.
- **Replicability and Sustainability:** The project's adaptable model and focus on universal values like solidarity ensure its relevance across different contexts.

Replicability

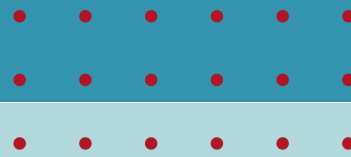
The **Solidarity Coffee** model is highly replicable due to the global popularity of coffee and its simple, accessible setup.

When implementing in other countries, key considerations include:

- Adapting to **local needs and resources**.
- Providing professional training for volunteers and staff.
- Establishing partnerships with community organizations for logistical and financial support.

The core concept—fostering solidarity through conversations over coffee—transcends cultural and geographical boundaries, making it a versatile initiative.





Sustainability

The project demonstrates strong sustainability through:



- 1. Recurring Implementation:** Successfully replicated four times in Lithuania.
- 2. Skill Development:** Participants gain valuable abilities that enhance employability and independence.
- 3. Community Support:** Builds a network of local partners and supporters who promote inclusivity.
- 4. Ongoing Learning:** Peer-to-peer sharing ensures the values and skills learned are passed on within the community.

The project's ability to challenge stereotypes and showcase inclusivity inspires other businesses and organizations to adopt similar practices.



Impact on Target Groups

Solidarity Coffee has positively influenced its target groups by:

- Empowering individuals with disabilities to develop skills, gain independence, and boost self-esteem.
- Encouraging community members to challenge stereotypes and foster understanding.
- Providing volunteers and staff with meaningful experiences in inclusivity and social responsibility.

By building connections over coffee, the project promotes empathy, solidarity, and a shared commitment to equality.



**SOLIDARITY
COFFEE**

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YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES VOLUNTEER IN THE DAY OF MARKETS EVENT

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[Nem Adom Fel Foundation](#)

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Website:

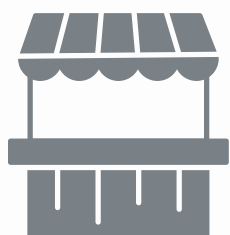
<https://nemadomfel.hu>

Country:

Hungary

Region of Impact:

Hungary



Description

The "**Day of the Markets**" (**Piacok Napja**) is a community event held in Downtown Budapest, Erzsébet Square, bringing together the city's most popular markets in a family-, child-, and dog-friendly environment. Organized twice a year, this free event offers a welcoming atmosphere where visitors can enjoy local products and community initiatives.

Volunteers from the **Nem Adom Fel Foundation**, particularly employees and staff from the **Nem Adom Fel Café and Restaurant**, actively participate in the event. These volunteers, many of whom are people with disabilities, contribute significantly to the program by:

- Assisting with **logistical tasks**, such as packing, transporting, setting up, and organizing equipment.
- Selling food and drink products, directly interacting with customers.
- Running **fundraising initiatives**, which support various causes, including aiding Ukrainian refugees.
- Conducting **sensitization sessions**, sharing their personal stories to raise public awareness about the challenges faced by people with disabilities and fostering acceptance and inclusion.

Their active involvement not only ensures the smooth operation of the event but also highlights the valuable contributions of people with disabilities, fostering community solidarity and inclusion through meaningful engagement.

Necessary Resources

The event relies on several resources to ensure its success:

- **Transportation Equipment:** The Foundation's minibus for delivering equipment and products to the venue.
- **Event Materials:** Tents, tables, tablecloths, and catering equipment, such as refrigerators, pastry coolers, coffee makers, and disposable utensils.
- **Human Resources:** Volunteers with disabilities and their mentors, who collaboratively manage all aspects of the event, from setup to customer interaction and awareness sessions.
- **Financial Support:** Provided by the Foundation and partner organizations to cover logistical and operational costs.

Volunteers with disabilities are a critical resource, contributing their skills, enthusiasm, and unique perspectives, which enrich the event's atmosphere and impact.

Evolution of the Practice

The first **Day of the Markets** event was held in September 2018 and has been organized twice yearly since then (except during the COVID-19 pandemic). The Nem Adom Fel Foundation has consistently played a key role, recruiting volunteers from its café staff and employee base to actively contribute to the event's success.

Over time, this practice has become a cornerstone of the Foundation's community engagement efforts, showcasing the capabilities and dedication of its volunteers with disabilities.

Impact on Skill Development

The program provides volunteers, particularly those with disabilities, opportunities to develop a wide range of skills:

- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Managing logistics, setting up equipment, and working alongside other team members.
- **Public Speaking and Sensitization:** Leading sessions to raise awareness about living with disabilities, improving communication and storytelling skills.
- **Sales and Customer Interaction:** Engaging with customers to sell products, enhancing interpersonal and business skills.
- **Problem-Solving and Adaptability:** Managing diverse tasks in a dynamic event setting.

These experiences empower volunteers, boosting their confidence, independence, and employability, while also enriching their personal growth.

Success and Innovation

The **Day of the Markets** is both successful and innovative because it combines community engagement with a strong focus on inclusion. Its key innovations include:

- Providing a **platform for people with disabilities** to actively contribute as volunteers, demonstrating their abilities and challenging stereotypes.
- Integrating **awareness-raising sessions** into a popular public event, creating meaningful conversations about disability and inclusion.
- Offering **diverse roles** for volunteers, from logistical support to direct customer engagement, fostering a holistic learning experience.

This approach creates a visible and impactful model for inclusion, encouraging communities to embrace diversity and solidarity.

Replicability

The core concept of the **Day of the Markets** - a community event that promotes inclusion and engagement - is highly adaptable.

To replicate this practice in other regions, key considerations include:

- Recruiting and training volunteers with disabilities to participate actively.
- Collaborating with local organizations and vendors to secure resources and logistical support.
- Tailoring the event to reflect the cultural and social dynamics of the local community.

By fostering inclusive participation, similar initiatives can be implemented globally, creating opportunities for skill-building, awareness-raising, and community solidarity.



Sustainability

The program's sustainability is evidenced by its consistent organization since 2018 and the continued enthusiasm of volunteers and community members.

Factors contributing to its sustainability include:



- **Regular Scheduling:** Twice-yearly events provide a reliable platform for community engagement.
- **Volunteer Dedication:** The ongoing commitment of volunteers with disabilities ensures a steady human resource base.
- **Community Impact:** The event fosters a strong sense of belonging and inclusivity, encouraging continued support from attendees and stakeholders.
- **Skill Development:** Participants gain valuable abilities that they can apply in other contexts, contributing to personal and professional growth.



Impact on Target Groups

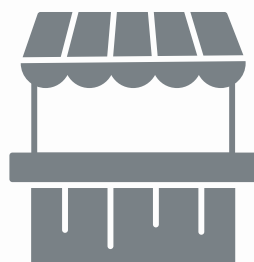
The Day of the Markets has a transformative impact on its target groups:

- **Volunteers with Disabilities:** Develop critical skills, gain confidence, and experience the satisfaction of contributing meaningfully to a community event.
- **Local Community Members:** Benefit from increased awareness and understanding of disability issues, fostering empathy and solidarity.
- **Participating Organizations:** Gain visibility and a platform to promote their products and causes.

Target Groups

The event engages a diverse range of participants, including:

- **Volunteers with disabilities:** Who take on active roles in organizing and managing the event.
- **Local community members:** Families, children, and individuals who attend and interact with the volunteers.
- **Organizations and vendors:** Who participate in the markets and collaborate with the Foundation.



YOUNG PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES
VOLUNTEER
IN THE DAY OF
THE MARKETS EVENT

Through its inclusive and interactive approach, the event strengthens community bonds, challenges stereotypes, and showcases the value of diversity and collaboration.

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YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ORGANISE AN INCLUSIVE FILM CLUB

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Website:

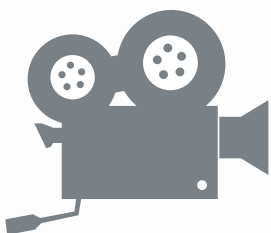
<https://nemadomfel.hu>

Country:

Hungary

Region of Impact:

Hungary



Description

The **Inclusive Public Film Club**, organized by young volunteers with disabilities, is hosted at the **Never Give Up Café**, a fully accessible venue managed by the Nem Adom Fel Foundation. This initiative originated from the volunteers' ideas, who, with the support of a mentor, took the lead in planning and implementing the program. **During the program:**

- **Volunteers selected screening themes** and curated a list of uplifting, motivating, and thought-provoking films with Hungarian dubbing, collaborating with a local video store manager to finalize the list.
- **Promotional activities**, such as creating Facebook posts for the Café's and Foundation's pages, were handled by the volunteers to recruit an inclusive audience.
- **Logistical and technical tasks**, including renting DVDs and setting up screening equipment, were managed by the volunteers, showcasing their organizational abilities.
- **Problem-solving in real time** was a key aspect, as volunteers overcame technical challenges such as faulty speakers and missing film dubs.

The program's goal was to foster inclusivity, provide meaningful cultural experiences, and empower young people with disabilities to lead a public leisure activity that highlights their abilities.

Necessary Resources

The program utilized existing resources to minimize costs:

- **Screening License:** The umbrella license, allowing access to around 10,000 films, was provided by the venue.
- **Technical Equipment:** The venue supplied necessary tools, such as projectors and sound systems.
- **Human Resources:** Volunteers with disabilities, supported by mentors, were instrumental in organizing and executing the event.
- **Promotion Platforms:** Social media pages of the Café and Foundation served as primary tools for audience engagement.

The involvement of volunteers with disabilities was crucial. Their dedication and skills not only drove the project but also demonstrated their capacity to lead and contribute meaningfully to community programs.

Evolution of the Practice

The film club began as a weekly event in September 2022 and transitioned to an occasional format after 2022. While the frequency decreased, the screenings became more targeted, often aligned with specific themes, events, or awareness days.

The practice remains a cornerstone of the Foundation's community initiatives, serving as an inclusive platform for engagement and cultural exchange. It continues to draw a dedicated audience, reinforcing its value as a space for thoughtful discussions and social integration.

Impact on Skill Development

The program provided a platform for young volunteers with disabilities to develop a variety of skills:

- **Event Planning and Coordination:** Brainstorming themes, creating film lists, and organizing logistics.
- **Digital Literacy:** Crafting promotional content and managing social media engagement.
- **Public Speaking:** Introducing films and leading discussions during events.
- **Problem-Solving and Adaptability:** Addressing technical issues in real time and finding creative solutions.
- **Teamwork:** Collaborating with peers, mentors, and external partners, such as the video store manager.

These experiences enhanced the confidence and independence of the volunteers, equipping them with practical skills applicable to future roles.

Success and Innovation

The **Inclusive Public Film Club** is successful and innovative because it:

- **Empowers young people with disabilities** to take leadership roles, showcasing their organizational and interpersonal skills.
- **Promotes inclusivity** by creating a space where diverse community members come together for cultural experiences.
- **Incorporates a multi-faceted approach** to learning, combining event management, technical skills, and public engagement.

By centering the initiative around volunteers with disabilities, the program challenges stereotypes and fosters a greater understanding of their abilities and contributions.

Replicability

The concept of an inclusive film club is highly replicable, as film screenings are a popular public activity worldwide. To replicate this program in other contexts, key considerations include:

- **Accessible Venues:** Ensure the location is inclusive and equipped with necessary technical resources.
- **Volunteer Support:** Provide mentorship and training for volunteers with disabilities.
- **Local Partnerships:** Collaborate with community organizations and media providers for logistical support.

With proper adaptations, the model can be implemented in various cultural and geographical settings, promoting inclusion and skill development globally.





Sustainability



The sustainability of the film club is ensured through:

- **Volunteer Development:** Continued skill-building among volunteers fosters their confidence and ability to lead future events.
- **Community Engagement:** A loyal audience ensures consistent support and interest in the program.
- **Resource Utilization:** Existing resources, such as the Café's equipment and social media platforms, keep costs low and operations manageable.

By maintaining a strong focus on inclusivity and leveraging local resources, the program remains impactful and sustainable over time.

Impact on Target Groups

The film club has had a transformative impact:

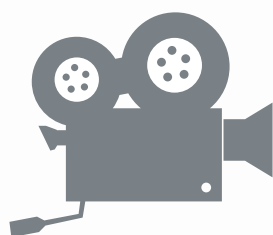
- **For Volunteers with Disabilities:** It has boosted their confidence, developed practical skills, and empowered them to take on leadership roles in community activities.
- **For the General Public:** It has increased awareness and acceptance of disabilities, creating a space for cultural exchange and inclusivity.

Target Groups

The program targets two main groups:

- **Volunteers with Disabilities:** Whrimary organizers, gaining skills and leadership experience.
- **The General Public:** A diverse audience of community members interested in inclusive cultural activities.

The initiative aims to foster connections between these groups, promoting mutual understanding and social integration.



YOUNG PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES
ORGANISE
AN INCLUSIVE
FILM CLUB

By bridging the gap between volunteers and the community, the program builds empathy, challenges stereotypes, and fosters a stronger sense of togetherness.

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TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AT MARGARET ISLAND

Organisation Name:
[Katakomba Foundation](#)

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Website:
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Country:
Hungary

Region of Impact:
Hungary



Description

The **Katakomba Foundation** is dedicated to enhancing the well-being, independence, and social engagement of young people with disabilities (YPWDs). As part of this mission, the foundation supported a group of YPWDs in planning and executing a team-building event on Margaret Island in Budapest. This initiative aimed to empower participants by allowing them to take charge of organizing the event, from selecting activities to managing logistics, while being guided by a mentor. The event not only fostered independence but also provided opportunities to improve communication, organizational, and leadership skills.

Program Details

During this event, participants assumed a variety of roles, ensuring full engagement and meaningful experiences:

- **Planning and Execution:** YPWDs took responsibility for designing the event, choosing activities, managing logistics, and coordinating participation, showcasing their growing autonomy.
- **Active Participation:** Attendees engaged in interactive activities such as team competitions, ball games, and a quiz contest, which was amplified using a microphone and speakers provided by the foundation. A picnic was also organized, fostering social interaction in a relaxed setting.
- **Volunteer Involvement:** Volunteers played a supportive role by assisting participants where needed, facilitating activities, and ensuring that an inclusive and welcoming environment was maintained throughout the event.
- **Provision of Resources:** The foundation provided necessary materials, including sports equipment, a sound system for quiz facilitation, and refreshments such as snacks and drinks to keep participants energized and engaged.

Objective

The primary goal of this initiative was to promote self-sufficiency among YPWDs, encouraging them to take ownership of social events and develop essential life skills. By leading the planning and execution process, participants practiced teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving in a real-world context. Volunteers reinforced this learning environment by providing guidance and ensuring accessibility.

Necessary Resources

To successfully carry out the event, various resources were essential:

- **Human Resources:** Skilled trainers, volunteers, and mentors who provided guidance and facilitated activities.
- **Equipment and Materials:** Sporting equipment for physical activities, sound amplification tools for the quiz competition, and refreshments to maintain participant engagement.
- **Logistical Support:** Coordination of transportation, event scheduling, and communication platforms for pre-event planning.

Evolution of the Practice


Since its inception in June 2022, the team-building initiative has evolved to allow YPWDs to take more initiative in planning and organizing social activities. Instead of being limited to a single annual event, these gatherings are now arranged sporadically based on participant interest and availability. This flexibility has enabled young people to develop greater confidence in organizing their own community-based events, strengthening their independence and leadership abilities.

Impact on Skill Development

The initiative has significantly contributed to the personal and social development of YPWDs by enhancing several key skills:


- **Organizational Skills:** Participants gained hands-on experience in event management, from planning to execution.
- **Communication and Social Interaction:** Engaging with peers, volunteers, and the public during the event improved interpersonal and teamwork skills.
- **Public Speaking Confidence:** The quiz competition required participants to speak into a microphone, which boosted their confidence in addressing an audience.
- **Physical and Coordination Skills:** Involvement in ball games and team challenges promoted motor skill development and overall well-being.

Success and Innovation



This initiative stands out as a model of self-empowerment, demonstrating a shift from adult-led programs to participant-driven experiences. The hands-on approach enables YPWDs to lead structured and meaningful activities, enhancing their confidence and fostering personal responsibility. The success of the event is reflected in the positive feedback from participants, who have expressed increased enthusiasm for organizing similar gatherings in the future. By incorporating a combination of physical activities, social interaction, and knowledge-based challenges such as the quiz competition, the program provides a well-rounded learning experience.

Replicability



This model is highly adaptable and can be implemented in other settings with minimal financial investment. Public parks, such as Margaret Island, offer an ideal environment for inclusive team-building events. Local organizations supporting individuals with disabilities can replicate the practice by ensuring access to mentorship, basic resources like sports equipment and refreshments, and a structured but flexible approach to event planning. The adaptability of this model ensures its feasibility across different cultural and logistical contexts.



Sustainability

The program's sustainability is **reinforced by the active engagement of participants and volunteers**, creating a cycle of learning and leadership. As YPWDs become more accustomed to organizing their own events, they gain confidence in taking the initiative for future activities. Additionally, the involvement of volunteers fosters a community-driven approach, ensuring ongoing support and inclusivity. The foundation's continued encouragement and provision of resources further guarantee the long-term viability of these initiatives.



Impact on Target Groups

Target Groups

The initiative primarily targets **young people with disabilities**, providing them with a platform for social interaction, skill development, and leadership growth.

Volunteers, both with and without disabilities, also play a crucial role by supporting event execution and facilitating inclusion.

By bringing together diverse individuals, the program fosters an environment where everyone can contribute and benefit, promoting a culture of mutual respect and cooperation.

Participants have reported a **heightened sense of accomplishment and belonging** as a result of their involvement in these activities. The inclusive nature of the events has encouraged **greater social interaction, reducing isolation** and **increasing confidence** in engaging with the broader community. Additionally, volunteers have gained valuable experience in inclusive facilitation, enhancing their ability to work effectively with individuals with disabilities.

The collaborative nature of the program has **strengthened bonds between participants and volunteers**, fostering a more cohesive and supportive community. Through active engagement and hands-on leadership experiences, YPWDs have demonstrated their capacity to take control of their own social and recreational activities, ultimately enhancing their independence and personal growth.



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES
AT MARGARET ISLAND

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VOLUNTEERING BY YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AT THE SZENTENDRE OPEN AIR MUSEUM

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Website:
<https://nemadomfel.hu>

Country:
Hungary

Region of Impact:
Szentendre, Hungary



Description

Nem Adom Fel Foundation, leveraging its commitment to the empowerment of young people with disabilities (YPWDs), initiated a volunteer program at the [Open Air Ethnographic Museum in Szentendre](#) (Skanzen). Under the guidance of the foundation's mentor, three YPWD employees spearheaded the planning and execution of garden maintenance activities, demonstrating leadership and organizational prowess.

Program Details

Throughout the program:

- **Event Planning and Execution:** YPWDs took the lead in organizing the activities, selecting tasks, and coordinating with the museum staff, fostering their leadership and planning skills.
- **Active Participation:** Participants engaged in garden maintenance tasks, such as collecting dry leaves and preparing the area for visitors, which facilitated practical and physical engagement.
- **Volunteer Engagement:** Volunteers from the foundation and the broader community played essential roles in supporting the YPWDs by assisting with logistics and providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all participants.

Objective

The main goal of this initiative is to **enhance the autonomy** and **professional skills** of YPWDs by involving them in meaningful volunteer activities that also serve the community. Volunteers help ensure these activities are executed smoothly, contributing to an enriching experience for all involved.

Necessary Resources

The program utilized existing resources to minimize costs:

- **Human Resources:** Includes YPWD employees leading the event, mentors, and additional volunteers for support.
- **Equipment and Materials:** Tools for garden maintenance and provisions for participants.
- **Facilities:** Utilization of the museum's garden spaces for activities and public interaction.

Evolution of the Practice

Originally a single event in April 2022, this volunteering initiative has grown into a **regular collaboration** with the museum, providing consistent volunteer opportunities. The success of the program has led to an increase in the frequency and variety of tasks the volunteers undertake.



Impact on Skill Development

The ongoing volunteer work has significantly enhanced various skills:

- **Organizational Skills:** From planning activities to coordinating with museum staff.
- **Communication Skills:** Enhanced through interactions with museum visitors and team collaboration.
- **Practical Skills:** In garden maintenance and event management, fostering a sense of responsibility and capability.

Success and Innovation



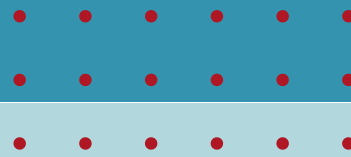
The initiative's success is evident in the **sustained partnership** with the museum and the **proactive involvement of YPWDs**.

Its innovative approach lies in empowering these young individuals to lead and manage community-focused projects, showcasing their capabilities and challenging conventional perceptions about disabilities.

Replicability



This model is highly adaptable and can be implemented in other cultural or public settings that benefit from regular volunteer involvement. It highlights the importance of creating opportunities that are both inclusive and empowering.



Sustainability



The sustainability of the volunteering initiative at the **Szentendre Open Air Museum (Skanzen)** is underpinned by a **strong, ongoing partnership** with the Skanzen, which consistently engages the Nem Adom Fel Alapítvány's volunteers for various projects. This enduring collaboration not only keeps the program vibrant and active but also ensures its long-term viability.

The **Skanzen** regularly reaches out to the foundation when they need volunteer support, especially for seasonal garden maintenance in spring and autumn or during special events. Involving young people with disabilities in the planning and execution of these activities enhances their commitment and sense of ownership, which are crucial for sustained participation. The foundation facilitates these efforts by providing the necessary coordination and resources, reinforcing the structure of support. Together, these elements foster a robust program that thrives on reliable partnerships and active involvement, securing its continuation and impact over time.



Impact on Target Groups

Participants gain not only **practical skills** but also develop **greater self-confidence** and **independence**.

The museum benefits from consistent volunteer support, and the broader community gains a deeper understanding and appreciation of the contributions of people with disabilities.

Target Groups

The primary target group includes **YPWDs** from the **Nem Adom Fel Café**. The museum and the broader community also benefit significantly, with the enhanced maintenance of the museum's facilities and the inclusive activities boosting community spirit and awareness.



VOLUNTEERING BY
YOUNG PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES
AT THE SZENTENDRE
OPEN AIR MUSEUM

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VOLUNTEER-BASED WORK PRACTICE

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[Down Syndrome Foundation](#)

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Website:

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Country:

Hungary

Region of Impact:

Hungary



Description

The **Down Syndrome Foundation** has implemented a **volunteer-based work program** designed for individuals with **intellectual disabilities**, utilizing the **supported employment methodology**. This program partners with **open market employers** like BB'z Bar & Grill, Empathy Café, and English Garden Kindergarten to provide real-world work experiences. Volunteers participate in activities ranging from 3 weeks to a year, working 4 hours per day for 2-3 days each week, which equips them with practical skills and prepares them for potential paid employment.

Program Details

During the program:

- **Role of Volunteers:** Participants volunteer in various settings, performing tasks that acclimate them to the demands and dynamics of a typical workplace.
- **Support Structure:** Each volunteer is supported by job coaches and staff, enhancing their job skills and confidence.
- **Employer Engagement:** Key partners provide essential on-the-job training and work opportunities, supporting the transition of these volunteers into the paid workforce.

Objective

The primary objective is to **enhance the employability** of workers with intellectual disabilities by offering them structured volunteer work experiences. This initiative aims to improve their **skills**, increase their **confidence**, and **demonstrate their workplace capabilities** to potential employers.

Necessary Resources

- **Human Resources:** Includes job coaches, support staff, and the cooperation of open market employers.
- **Facilities:** Utilizes the workplaces of partnering employers for practical job training.
- **Equipment and Materials:** Tools and resources needed for specific job tasks at each work site.

Evolution of the Practice

Since its inception in April 2018, the program has consistently provided volunteer work opportunities to 11 participants, focusing on building a reliable and effective model before considering expansion.



Impact on Skill Development

Participants have developed **essential workplace skills** such as punctuality, communication, customer service, and task management.

The structured support from job coaches has also enhanced their **social skills** and **confidence**, preparing them for future employment opportunities.



Success and Innovation

The program's success is highlighted by the stable job placements of all participants within the open market following their volunteer experiences.

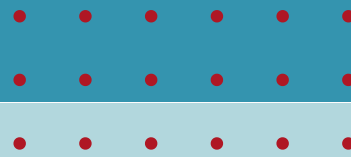
Its innovative approach lies in providing a long-term, continuous training environment that allows for significant personal and professional growth.



Replicability

This model can be replicated in various settings by partnering with open market employers willing to integrate individuals with intellectual disabilities into their workforce.

The structure of supported employment can be tailored to meet local conditions and needs.



Sustainability

The sustainability of the program is **secured through a strong partnership with open market employers** who benefit from hiring trained and familiar volunteers, thus reducing onboarding costs and time. The **Down Syndrome Foundation's** continuous support guarantees stability and consistency, which is vital for the program's longevity.

Additionally, the ongoing enthusiasm of the volunteers contributes to a positive and engaging atmosphere, enhancing both learning and participation. This supportive and productive environment ensures the program remains effective and continues to attract employer support, facilitating its ongoing success and future viability.



Impact on Target Groups

Target Groups

The primary target group includes young adults with intellectual disabilities seeking employment.

Employers in the open job market also form a crucial target group, benefiting from access to a pool of prepared and capable potential employees.

For participants, the program has significantly **enhanced** their **employability, confidence, and independence.**

Employers benefit from access to a **new talent pool** that is ready to engage effectively in their work environments, promoting diversity and inclusion within the workplace.



VOLUNTEER-BASED
WORK PRACTICE

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VOLUNTEER INITIATIVE AT BUDAPEST ZOO

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[Nem Adom Fel Café](#)

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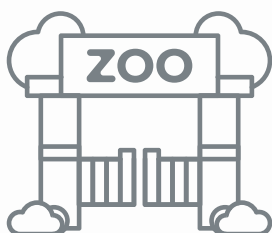
<https://nemadomfelkavezo.hu>

Country:

Hungary

Region of Impact:

Budapest, Hungary



Description

Employees of the **Nem Adom Fel Café**, guided by their affection for animals, initiated a volunteer program at the **Budapest Zoo**. This program was orchestrated by three employees with disabilities, with coordination from the café's mentor. Initial planning was conducted via Zoom with the zoo's volunteer coordinator, followed by a recruitment drive among the café's staff through phone, Messenger, and email. The day's activities included distributing flyers, assisting with raffle draws, and a tour of the zoo, culminating in the adoption of Benedek, a three-legged hedgehog.

Program Details

- **Planning and Recruitment:** Organized by employees with disabilities, ensuring they lead the activity setup.
- **Volunteer Activities:** Participants spent four hours assisting zoo visitors and engaging in scheduled events, enhancing their interactional skills.
- **Role of Volunteers:** Volunteers from the café supported zoo events, gaining exposure to operational aspects of large-scale event management.

Objective

The main goal of this initiative is to integrate employees with disabilities into community service roles, **improving** their **job skills** and **social interactions** while promoting inclusivity in the workplace.

Necessary Resources

- **Human Resources:** Employees with disabilities leading the project, supported by the café's mentor and the zoo's volunteer coordinator.
- **Materials:** Flyers, chocolates, and raffle prizes provided by the zoo.
- **Communication Tools:** Zoom for meetings, phones, and email for volunteer coordination.

Evolution of the Practice

What began as a single event in May 2022 has developed into a **consistent partnership** with the zoo, with the café regularly providing volunteers for various events. This ongoing relationship has solidified, offering regular engagement opportunities for the café's employees.



Impact on Skill Development

The program significantly enhances participants' teamwork, communication, and leadership skills.

Regular interactions with zoo staff and visitors improve their social abilities and confidence, preparing them for broader employment opportunities.



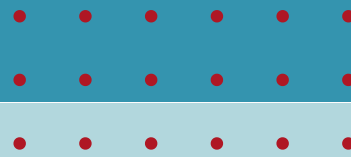
Success and Innovation

This initiative is successful due to its sustainable impact on community engagement and personal development for participants. It's innovative in its approach to inclusivity, actively involving employees with disabilities in significant roles within community events.



Replicability

This model can be adapted in various settings by partnering with local institutions that can benefit from organized volunteer support. Essential elements include engaging participants with disabilities in meaningful roles and utilizing effective communication tools for organization and recruitment.



Sustainability



This practice ensures sustainability through its strong **partnership** framework and **inclusive** approach. By establishing a **regular collaboration** with the zoo, there is a **continuous demand for volunteers**, providing consistent opportunities for engagement. The involvement of employees with disabilities in organizing and participating in these events supports a sense of ownership and responsibility, motivating ongoing participation. Additionally, the café's mentor supports the volunteers, ensuring a structured and supportive environment that encourages long-term commitment. The practice also promotes awareness and inclusivity, which can attract further community support and partnerships. By addressing social needs and empowering individuals, this program builds a resilient community foundation, ensuring its sustainability and potential growth over time.

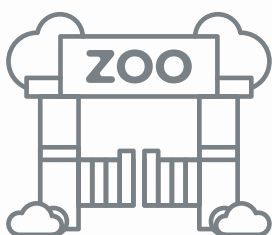


Impact on Target Groups

Target Groups

The primary beneficiaries are the **café's employees with disabilities**, who gain valuable work experience and social skills. Secondary beneficiaries include **zoo visitors** who enjoy enhanced service and interaction with the volunteers, promoting a more inclusive community atmosphere.

Participants experience significant **professional** and **personal growth**, gaining **confidence** and **skills** that improve their employability and social integration. The broader community benefits from increased **awareness** of the capabilities of individuals with disabilities, fostering a more inclusive and understanding social environment.



**VOLUNTEER
INITIATIVE AT
BUDAPEST ZOO**

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NEVRONAS FESTIVAL

Organisation Name:

[Nevronas](#)

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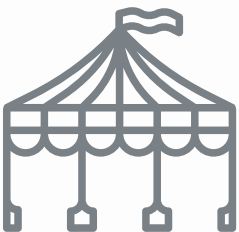
<https://nevronas.gr/>

Country:

Greece

Region of Impact:

Athens, Greece



Description

Nevronas established the annual **NEVRONAS FESTIVAL**, a dynamic **Festival of Inclusive Performing Arts and Artistic Interaction** located in the heart of Athens at the vibrant Technopolis of the Municipality. This unique festival stands as a beacon of **accessibility** and **non-discrimination**, showcasing the extraordinary talents of both professional and amateur artists with disabilities. The event is crafted to illuminate the critical importance of accessibility and inclusion within the arts, offering a rich five-day experience filled with **theater, music, dance, cinema**, and more. It invites an **inclusive audience**, where individuals with and without disabilities engage and participate on an equal footing, fostering a community of diversity and mutual respect.

Program Details

- **Volunteer Engagement:** The festival involves **120 volunteers**, including disabled individuals, who play critical roles in its execution. These volunteers receive specialized training on disability and neurodivergence, enhancing the inclusivity of the event.
- **Activities:** Volunteers assist in various festival activities, from managing performances and workshops to facilitating discussions and exhibitions, ensuring all events are accessible to every attendee.

Objective

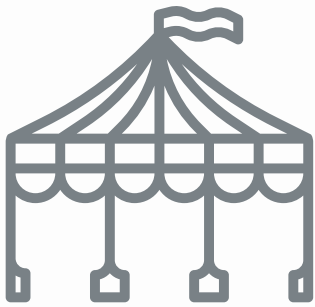
The FESTIVAL aims to demonstrate the potential of inclusive arts to foster community engagement and enhance understanding among attendees of diverse abilities. It seeks to challenge perceptions about disability and promote a more inclusive society through artistic expression.

Necessary Resources

- **Human Resources:** Trained professionals in disability, accessibility, and inclusion are crucial for volunteer training and overall festival organization.
- **Financial Resources:** Funding from corporate sponsors, disability agencies, ticket sales, and individual donations supports the logistical and operational aspects of the festival.

Evolution of the Practice

From its inception, the number of volunteers has grown significantly, with an increasing focus on improving training methods and volunteer engagement strategies. Feedback is actively sought from participants to refine and enhance the festival experience continually.



Impact on Skill Development

Volunteers, particularly those with disabilities, develop crucial skills such as communication, problem-solving, and organizational capabilities.

The festival environment empowers them to serve as community ambassadors, promoting the values of inclusion and accessibility.



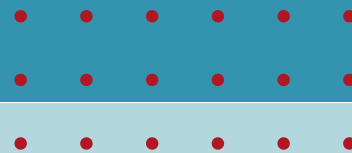
Success and Innovation

The FESTival is deemed successful based on positive feedback and the recurring participation of volunteers, indicating its impact and acceptance. The concept is innovative in Greece, as it systematically involves disabled individuals in significant roles, promoting true inclusivity in volunteering.



Replicability

This model can be adapted in various cultural or community settings that benefit from inclusive volunteer programs. Essential elements include a strong focus on training, community engagement, and ensuring all activities are accessible.



Sustainability

Sustainability is supported by **continuous investment** in **human resources** and securing adequate **funding**. The ongoing commitment to employing volunteers with disabilities and maintaining strong partnerships with funders ensures the program's future viability.

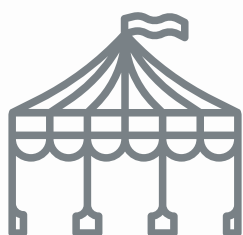


Impact on Target Groups

Volunteers report significant **personal growth** and increased **community involvement** as a result of their participation. The program's inclusivity has led to greater **awareness** and **acceptance** of people with disabilities within the broader community, contributing to a more inclusive culture.

Target Groups

Primary target groups include individuals with **motor disabilities**, mild **intellectual disabilities**, **neurodiversity**, and low **vision**. The festival not only enhances their social and professional skills but also integrates them more fully into community activities.



NEVRONAS
FESTIVAL

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SOCIAL GARDENS

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Social media:

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larondineamaccarelo](https://facebook.com/larondineamaccarelo)

Country:

Italy

Region of Impact:

Umbria



Description

Established in 2015, La Rondine a Maccarelo is dedicated to enhancing **social inclusion** through **structured agricultural projects**. The cooperative manages social gardens on the outskirts of Città di Castello, offering community plots to pensioners and integrating disadvantaged members into garden management, thus fostering an inclusive environment.

Program Details

- **Volunteer Roles:** Disabled members assist in routine maintenance and event organization, transforming from service recipients to providers.
- **Activities:** Participants are responsible for their plots and partake in cooperative events, cultivating an inclusive community where skills and knowledge are exchanged.

Objective

The project aims to empower disabled individuals, enabling them to contribute actively to community life and challenging traditional roles by promoting broader societal inclusion.

Necessary Resources

- **Human Resources:** Cooperative members, particularly those with disabilities, supported by organizational mentors.
- **Physical Resources:** Gardening tools, community event spaces, and accessibility adaptations to ensure active participation.

Evolution of the Practice

Since assuming management in 2024, the cooperative has fostered a sustainable model of active and inclusive participation, with disabled volunteers regularly engaging alongside elderly gardeners to enhance the cooperative's community-driven approach.



Impact on Skill Development

The program significantly enhances participants' agricultural, social, and leadership skills. Disabled volunteers experience marked improvements in self-esteem and autonomy.

Engaging in garden maintenance and community activities helps develop practical skills like planting and harvesting, while planning and executing events enhance organizational and problem-solving skills. Regular interactions with pensioners and other community members boost communication abilities and foster an intergenerational exchange of knowledge and traditions.



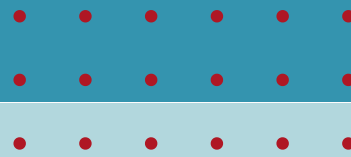
Success and Innovation

The initiative merges social inclusion with community agriculture, creating a sustainable model of community engagement. Its innovation lies in empowering disabled individuals, challenging traditional perceptions by focusing on their capabilities and contributions.



Replicability

The model can be adapted to other regions with minimal adjustments. Integration of disadvantaged groups into meaningful roles within community-based projects is key to successful replication.



Sustainability

Sustainability is achieved through robust community involvement and continuous support from local stakeholders. The cooperative's efforts are supported by ongoing training programs, efficient resource management, and regular feedback mechanisms that help adapt and improve the project. Strategic partnerships with local organizations ensure a steady flow of resources and community support, enhancing the project's long-term viability.



Impact on Target Groups

Target Groups

Primary beneficiaries include individuals with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities, alongside retired horticulturists who contribute their expertise, enhancing community integration and reducing social isolation among participants.

The social gardens significantly impact participants by providing a platform for active contribution and improving community life. Disabled volunteers gain independence and a stronger community presence, while the broader community benefits from an increased awareness of diversity and inclusion, fostering a more cohesive social environment.



**SOCIAL
GARDENS**

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13

DELIVERING SOLIDARITY FOOD

Organisation Name:
[Cura e Riabilitazione cooperativa sociale](https://curaeriabilitazione.org)

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Website:
<https://curaeriabilitazione.org>

Country:
 Italy

Region of Impact:
 Lombardia, Italy



Description

Founded on the principle that everyone deserves to be recognized for their inherent value, Cura e Riabilitazione is committed to fostering an environment where the need for assistance does not diminish a person's worth. In an enlightening moment during a lunch gathering in 2011, a young man with severe psycho-physical disabilities asked a simple yet profound question: "What did you eat last night?" This gesture, reminiscent of a grandmother's warmth, led to an insight that those with significant disabilities can offer **unique interpersonal contributions**, challenging societal expectations. Motivated by this realization, the cooperative embarked on a **partnership** with [Banco di Solidarietà](#), an organization dedicated to delivering food to those in need. This initiative not only provides essential services but also builds meaningful personal connections with recipients, transcending the traditional volunteer role by emphasizing empathy and companionship. **Volunteers**, including those **with severe disabilities**, engage in delivering food, sharing stories, and creating bonds that celebrate each individual's contribution to the community.

Program Details

- **Activities:** Volunteers engage in delivering food packages, interacting with recipients, and sharing personal stories, fostering a sense of community and mutual respect.
- **Training:** Participants receive training focused on empathy and understanding, equipping them with the skills to engage effectively and compassionately.

Objective

The objective of Cura e Riabilitazione's Delivering Solidarity Food program is to **redefine societal views of individuals with severe disabilities** by actively involving them in meaningful volunteer roles. This initiative demonstrates their capabilities beyond just receiving care, enhancing their autonomy and social skills through practical engagement. Volunteers develop important **interpersonal skills** and gain **confidence**, which transfers to other areas of their lives. The program also emphasizes community collaboration, partnering with local organizations to support both people with disabilities and those facing financial hardships. By addressing volunteers' physical needs during activities, the project ensures they can focus fully on contributing effectively, promoting a more inclusive community environment. This streamlined approach not only challenges stereotypes but also fosters significant community integration and personal development for participants.

Necessary Resources

- **Human Resources:** Includes a dedicated team of professionals who support and train the volunteers.
- **Logistics:** Accessible transportation and arrangements for safe and efficient food delivery.

Evolution of the Practice

From its inception, the program has grown into a well-regarded community service, with the cooperative continually refining its approach to volunteer engagement and training. This evolution reflects a deepening understanding of the capabilities and potential of individuals with disabilities.

Impact on Skill Development

Volunteers develop significant **interpersonal skills**, such as **communication** and **empathy**, which are reinforced through their regular interactions.

The experience not only enhances their abilities to perform tasks but also enriches their personal interactions within and beyond the program.

Success and Innovation

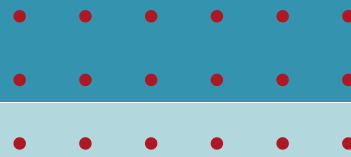
The program has proven highly effective in **transforming how participants with disabilities are perceived**, firmly establishing them as active, contributing members of the community. The initiative is lauded for its practical application of **inclusivity**, moving beyond conventional volunteer tasks by fostering **deep personal connections between volunteers and service recipients**. Volunteers often go beyond their assigned roles, creating personalized experiences that resonate with both givers and receivers. For instance, **volunteers have initiated additional social activities**, such as organizing gatherings for the elderly, which enhance communal bonds and underscore the reciprocal nature of support within the community.

These actions not only demonstrate the volunteers' capabilities but also highlight their willingness to engage in empathetic and caring relationships. Moreover, the project's design encourages **ongoing reflection** and **dialogue** among participants, enriching their volunteer experience and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. This reflective practice, combined with the active engagement in community service, positions the initiative as a model of social innovation that significantly benefits both individuals and the broader community.

Replicability

The model's emphasis on empathy and personal growth makes it adaptable to other settings looking to engage volunteers with disabilities meaningfully. Essential to replication is the commitment to training and the creation of an inclusive environment that values all contributions.





Sustainability

Sustainability is ensured through ongoing training, support from the community, and partnerships with local organizations. By maintaining strong relationships with all stakeholders and continuously adapting to meet the needs of volunteers and recipients alike, the program ensures its long-term viability.



Impact on Target Groups

The program significantly impacts its volunteers by providing them with a platform to contribute meaningfully to society, enhancing their social integration, and improving their life skills.

For the community, the program offers a new perspective on disability, promoting inclusivity and empathy through firsthand interaction and shared experiences.

Target Groups

The primary participants are **individuals with severe psycho-physical disabilities**, engaged in a program that challenges perceptions and fosters inclusion. The broader community, including recipients of the food deliveries, benefits from the interactions and the breaking down of societal barriers.



DELIVERING SOLIDARITY FOOD

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INCLUSIVE CLEANUP: PALERMO GREEN

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[UNIAMOCI APS](#)

Contact Details:

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Website:

<https://uniamoci.eu/>

Country:

Italy

Region of Impact:

Sicily



Description

Ignazio has been an integral volunteer at **Uniamoci APS** for about five years, actively participating in the "**Palermo Green**" project. Each month, he dedicates time to enhancing the city's public spaces through **cleaning and gardening**, endeavors that are greatly valued by the local community. Beyond these environmental efforts, Ignazio extends his warmth and experience to **assisting with children's educational activities**, inspired by his nurturing relationship with his own nephews. His involvement deepens through the "IMProVe 2.0" initiative, where he supports nature workshops, navigating logistical challenges to make meaningful contributions across various settings.

Program Details

- **Activities:** Regular cleaning of public areas, maintenance of green spaces, and support in educational programs for children.
- **Volunteer Engagement:** Ignazio, alongside other volunteers, embodies the project's spirit by maintaining urban spaces and fostering educational opportunities for young residents.

Objective

The objective of "Palermo Green" is to cultivate a culture of inclusivity and active community participation by utilizing the diverse abilities of volunteers like Ignazio. The project aims to:

- **Promote Social Inclusion:** Facilitate opportunities for people of all abilities to contribute to environmental and social projects.
- **Skill Development:** Enable volunteers to enhance practical, interpersonal, and social competencies.
- **Community Enhancement:** Improve the aesthetic and functional quality of public spaces.
- **Foster Community Bonds:** Strengthen connections within the community, ensuring volunteers are recognized as key contributors to the city's welfare.



Impact on Skill Development



Ignazio's involvement in **"Palermo Green"** has notably advanced his environmental stewardship skills and his ability to interact effectively with children.

These activities bolster his leadership qualities and community engagement, reinforcing his personal growth and integration within the community.



Success and Innovation

"Palermo Green" is lauded for seamlessly integrating environmental care with inclusive volunteerism.



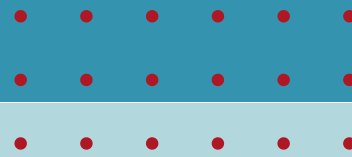
The project's success is reflected in the visible improvement of Palermo's urban areas and the positive community feedback. Its innovative approach lies in empowering volunteers with various abilities to lead and manage significant urban projects, thereby enhancing their sense of agency and belonging.

The focus on appropriate social interactions, especially in settings involving children, further underscores the project's commitment to responsible and inclusive volunteerism.

Replicability



The inclusive nature of this project makes it a viable model for replication in other urban areas, both nationally and internationally. Key to its adaptability is the flexibility to tailor activities to local needs and incorporate volunteers with diverse skill sets.



Sustainability

Sustainability is achieved through the enduring commitment of volunteers and the community's appreciation of the improved public spaces. Continued activities post-initial funding highlight the project's independence from external financial support, relying instead on the sustained involvement of local volunteers and partnerships with civic organizations.

This project transcends traditional environmental initiatives by fostering an inclusive atmosphere where every volunteer, regardless of ability, is pivotal to the city's vibrancy and communal spirit.



Target Groups

Main beneficiaries include local residents who enjoy revitalized public spaces and children who engage in the project's educational activities.



**INCLUSIVE CLEANUP:
PALERMO GREEN**

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15

DAVIDE'S STORY: PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH VIDEOMAKING

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[UNIAMOCI APS](#)

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Website:
<https://uniamoci.eu/>

Country:
Italy

Region of Impact:
Palermo, Sicily



Description

UNIAMOCI APS, based in Palermo and active since 2008, champions the social inclusion of individuals with disabilities through integration, education, advocacy, and social support, emphasizing youth involvement and educational outreach. A standout example of this mission is **Davide**, a volunteer who, over the past decade, has transformed from a reserved participant into a **key figure in the organization**. Initially overlooked for a training program due to his shyness and perceived lack of readiness, Davide discovered his passion for **videomaking** through UNIAMOCI APS. He now serves as the audio and video technician for the organization's web radio, Senza Barriere, and directs the production of promotional content, bringing valuable creative insights and technical expertise to the team.

Program Details

- **Activities:** Davide engages in video editing, directs promotional videos, supports educational activities, and operates as a DJ and audio technician at events. His workspace, affectionately known as "Davide's room," symbolizes his significant contribution to the organization.
- **Training:** Davide received on-the-job training in videomaking, which allowed him to excel in both creative expression and technical skills.

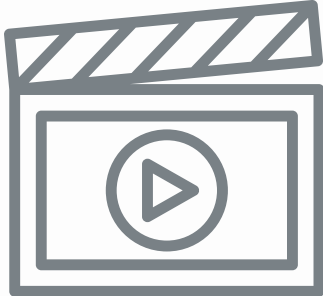
Objective

The project aims to harness the creative talents of volunteers like Davide to enhance their skills and foster inclusion. Objectives include:

- **Skill Development:** Provide immersive learning in audio-video production, enhancing technical skills and creative expression.
- **Creative Expression:** Offer a platform for volunteers to produce videos that share stories and promote social awareness.
- **Awareness Raising:** Utilize promotional videos to highlight issues of inclusion and accessibility, educating and advocating for societal change.
- **Community Building:** Create a supportive environment where individuals with disabilities collaborate with others, fostering connections and community spirit.
- **Social Innovation:** Stimulate creative solutions to improve quality of life for people with disabilities and impact the broader community positively.



Impact on Skill Development



Davide has notably improved in self-confidence, teamwork, self-learning motivation, initiative, and organizational skills.

His journey emphasizes the transformative impact of tailored volunteer roles that align personal interests with organizational needs.



Success and Innovation



Davide's involvement exemplifies the program's success, marked by his transition from participant to a pivotal team member.

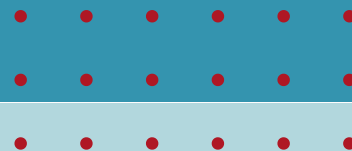
His role in technology and creative projects highlights the program's innovative approach to integrating people with disabilities into active and essential roles, fostering mutual respect and enhancing organizational capabilities.

Replicability



This model can be effectively replicated by matching organizational needs with volunteers' skills and interests, ensuring that participants like Davide can thrive and contribute meaningfully.

The key to success lies in recognizing and nurturing individual talents within a supportive framework.



Sustainability

Sustainability is achieved by aligning Davide's technical skills and interests with the organization's ongoing projects, ensuring a continuous contribution that benefits both parties. Support for personal and professional growth ensures long-term engagement and success.

Davide's story is a testament to the power of recognizing and nurturing individual potential to foster an inclusive, supportive, and productive community environment.



Target Groups

- Individuals with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.
- Volunteers without disabilities interested in supporting the cause.
- Social professionals and probation volunteers.



DAVIDE'S STORY:
PROMOTING SOCIAL
INCLUSION THROUGH
VIDEOMAKING

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ASSISTANCE TO ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS

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[Fondazione Alba Anffas Crema Onlus](#)

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Website:

<https://anffascrema.it/>

Country:

Italy

Region of Impact:

Lombardia



Description

Fondazione Alba Anffas Crema Onlus has been dedicated since 2008 to enhancing the lives of people with disabilities through educational and social integration programs in Crema. A standout initiative is the **weekly outings to the Crema city market**, where **elderly residents** from the [RSA “Casalbergo”](#) and **volunteers with disabilities** from the CSE “Le Villette” engage in activities that range from **shopping** to **socializing**. This interaction not only enriches the elderly's lives by reconnecting them with community life but also empowers the volunteers by involving them in meaningful societal roles.

Program Details

- **Activities:** Weekly market visits where volunteers assist elderly participants in shopping and navigating the market, fostering social interactions and community engagement.
- **Support Structure:** Each outing is facilitated by a professional educator, an RSA animator, and a university trainee, ensuring a supportive and enriching experience for all participants.

Objective

The project aims to foster mutual enrichment and social inclusion by:

- **Promoting Active Participation:** Encouraging people with disabilities to take on active roles that contribute to community life.
- **Enhancing Skills:** Developing practical abilities such as mobility assistance and interpersonal interactions among volunteers.
- **Improving Quality of Life:** Offering elderly residents the opportunity to engage in community activities, enhancing their social interactions and overall well-being.
- **Building Community Connections:** Strengthening ties between volunteers, elderly individuals, and the broader community, promoting a culture of inclusivity.



Impact on Skill Development



Participants develop essential life skills through their involvement in the program.

Volunteers learn to assist with mobility aids, navigate social settings, and manage interpersonal relationships, which are crucial for personal development and community integration.

Success and Innovation



The initiative's success lies in its ability to transform perceptions of people with disabilities from passive recipients of care to active contributors to society.

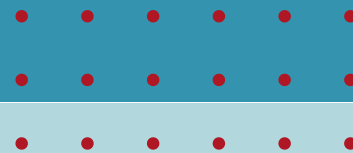
The program is innovative in how it integrates volunteers with disabilities into roles that have a direct positive impact on the community, such as aiding elderly individuals. This not only challenges societal stereotypes but also enhances the volunteers' self-esteem and self-perception.

Replicability



The concept of engaging people with disabilities in volunteer roles that utilize their capabilities can be replicated in various contexts.

The key is to match the activities with the volunteers' interests and abilities, ensuring the experience is fulfilling and contributes positively to their self-identity and societal perception.



Sustainability

Sustainability is achieved through the integration of these activities into the existing resources of the organizations involved. By aligning the project with the strategic goals of both the RSA and the CSE, it requires minimal additional resources, relying instead on the effective utilization of existing staff and facilities. This program not only provides practical assistance to the elderly but also plays a crucial role in promoting social inclusion and active participation, reinforcing the value of every individual, regardless of age or ability.



Target Groups

- People with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.
- Elderly individuals from the RSA “Casalbergo.”
- University trainees and professional educators involved in supervising and facilitating the outings.



**ASSISTANCE TO
ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS**

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HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS VOLUNTEERING FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Organisation Name:

Resource Center of
Parents of Children
with Disabilities

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resursen.centar@yahoo.com

Country:

North Macedonia

Region of Impact:

North Macedonia



Description

Since 2016, the **Resource Center of Parents of Children with Disabilities** has been pioneering a volunteer program in Bitola, North Macedonia, which involves high school students in supporting families of children with special needs. This initiative promotes social inclusion and personal growth among students while providing invaluable assistance to families. Initiating with the development of a comprehensive training manual titled “Change Yourself, Change the World! Volunteer!”, the program has successfully engaged about 250 students in a variety of activities, from social outings to respite care for families.

Program Details

- **Activities:** Students volunteer to accompany children to movies, theater performances, sports events, and participate in camps aimed at providing psychological support to families.
- **Training:** Volunteers receive thorough training to equip them with the necessary skills for supporting and interacting with children and their families effectively.

Objective

The initiative aims to improve community integration and the quality of life by:

- **Promoting Active Involvement:** Encouraging high school students to take part in community service, thus fostering a sense of responsibility and civic awareness.
- **Developing Skills:** Improving social, cognitive, and emotional skills of both volunteers and children through engaging and supportive activities.
- **Building Community Links:** Strengthening community ties by involving schools, families, and local businesses in the support of inclusive activities.



Impact on Skill Development



Volunteers gain essential life skills including empathy, teamwork, and leadership.

Concurrently, children experience enhanced social interaction, boosting their confidence and active participation in community life.

This reciprocal relationship enriches the social and psychological well-being of all involved.



Success and Innovation



This initiative's success lies in **transforming** the **perception of youth volunteerism** from **passive participation** to **active community engagement**.

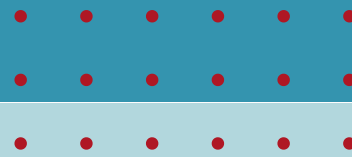
It is innovative in its approach by combining educational, social, and recreational elements that mutually benefit volunteers and children with special needs, promoting shared growth and understanding.

Replicability



This model is adaptable to various educational and community contexts globally.

Success hinges on implementing structured training and ensuring the active participation of local educational institutions and community organizations.



Sustainability

The program's sustainability is ensured through continuous collaboration with local schools, community centers, and family support networks. These partnerships provide necessary resources and support to sustain the program's activities. By enabling young volunteers to make significant contributions to the lives of children with special needs, the initiative not only fosters personal development among the volunteers but also strengthens community bonds and cultivates a culture of inclusivity and mutual support.



Target Groups

- Children and youth with special needs.
- High school students.
- Educators and family members of the children.



HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS
VOLUNTEERING FOR
FAMILIES OF
CHILDREN WITH
SPECIAL NEEDS

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YOUTH MOBILITY AND INCLUSION THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Organisation Name:

[KRIK Center for Youth
Activism](https://www.krik.org.mk/Activism)

Contact Details:

Angela Zdravkovska
kriksending@gmail.com

Website:

[https://www.krik.org.mk/
home](https://www.krik.org.mk/home)

Country:

North Macedonia

Region of Impact:

Skopje; Center for
Youth Activism - KRIK

Funded by:

Erasmus+ program,
European Union



Description

For over a decade, the **KRIK Center for Youth Activism** has been a pioneering force in integrating young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities into international mobility projects. The "All Inclusive" initiative, funded by the Erasmus+ program, specifically addresses the challenges and barriers these individuals face in participating in such opportunities across Finland, Italy, and North Macedonia. This project not only facilitates mobility but also fosters an environment where these young individuals can thrive, contribute, and learn from their international experiences.

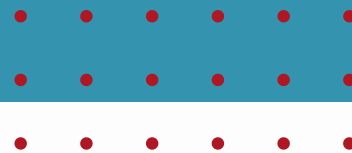
Program Details

- **Activities:** The project includes a range of support measures such as comprehensive training before departure, continuous support during the mobility phase, and integration activities that help participants acclimate and engage fully in their host communities.
- **Training:** A specifically designed manual guides the entire mobility process, from initial call promotion and participant selection to post-mobility support, ensuring all stakeholders are well-prepared to handle the unique needs of participants with disabilities.

Objective

The overarching goal of the All Inclusive project is to **redefine** the **international mobility** landscape **for young people with disabilities** by:

- **Enhancing Accessibility:** Developing innovative methods and practical guidelines to facilitate easier access to international volunteer opportunities for young people with disabilities.
- **Promoting Inclusion:** Encouraging an inclusive atmosphere in all activities, ensuring participants can engage fully and equally, benefiting from rich cultural exchanges and learning opportunities.
- **Empowering Participants:** Providing the tools and experiences necessary for these young individuals to develop crucial life skills, increase their self-confidence, and achieve personal growth and professional development.



Impact on Skill Development

Participants of the All Inclusive project experience significant growth in several key areas:



- **Personal Development:** Gaining independence and self-reliance through managing day-to-day activities in a new cultural setting.
- **Social Skills:** Enhancing communication abilities and teamwork through continuous interactions with a diverse group of individuals and professionals.
- **Problem-Solving:** Navigating and resolving challenges that arise in unfamiliar environments, boosting resilience and adaptability.

Success and Innovation

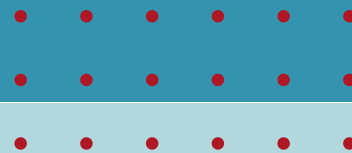


The success of the All Inclusive project is evident in its **transformative approach** to mobility for young people with disabilities. By offering tailored support and creating comprehensive guidelines, the project ensures that participants are not only **prepared** but also **actively involved** in their experiences abroad. The project is innovative in its approach to handling the intricacies of international mobility for individuals with special needs, from the detailed preparation phase to the thoughtful execution of mobility activities.

Replicability



This model's structured and detailed approach makes it highly replicable in different cultural and organizational contexts worldwide. Its success hinges on its adaptability and the commitment to maintaining high standards of support and inclusion.



Sustainability

The sustainability of the All Inclusive project is ensured through ongoing partnerships, continuous improvement of program materials, and advocacy for the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of society. By securing long-term commitments from all stakeholders and fostering a culture of inclusivity, the project guarantees lasting impact and continuous development.



Impact on Target Groups

The program has profoundly impacted its participants by broadening their horizons, enhancing their **employability**, and fostering a sense of global **citizenship**.

It has also played a crucial role in **changing societal perceptions** towards people with disabilities, promoting greater acceptance and understanding across communities.

Target Groups

The primary beneficiaries are young individuals with disabilities, who through this program, gain unprecedented access to international mobility opportunities that spur personal and professional growth. The broader community, including partner organizations and host communities, also benefits from the enriched diversity and the shared learning experiences.

- Individuals with **intellectual** and **developmental disabilities** participating in mobility programs.
- **Volunteers** and **professionals** involved in international exchanges and mobility programs.
- **Partner organizations** and educational institutions engaged in the project.



YOUTH MOBILITY
AND INCLUSION
THROUGH
VOLUNTEERING

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SPORT FOR SOCIAL ACTION

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[Youth Alliance \(Krushevo\)](#)

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Project Website:

<https://youthalliance.org.mk/pid/58>

Country:

North Macedonia

Region of Impact:

North Macedonia
(Southwest region/Krushevo)



Description

Initiated in 2018 by **Youth Alliance – Krushevo**, the "**Sport for Social Action**" project was born from a vision to leverage **sports** as a powerful **tool for social inclusion**. Funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Sport program, the project has quickly evolved into a collaborative effort between the following 5 partners: Youth Alliance - Krusevo (Republic of North Macedonia), [Special Olympics Macedonia](#) (Republic of North Macedonia), [EuroDEMOS](#) (Romania), [Inter Alia](#) (Greece) and [Special Olympics Slovenia](#) (Slovenia). Its foundation lies in the belief that sports can **bridge gaps between young people with and without intellectual disabilities**, fostering a sense of community and mutual **respect**. By integrating these groups into various sports activities, the project not only promotes volunteerism but also enhances social cohesion and inclusivity across borders.

Program Details

- **Activities:** This comprehensive initiative featured transnational coordination meetings, roundtables, national trainings, the development of the "Inclusive Volunteering 1+1" model, and public campaigns to raise awareness about the role of sports in fostering social inclusion.
- **Training:** Partners participated in roundtables in Skopje and Athens, focusing on innovative practices and stakeholder engagement across sectors to refine and implement effective inclusive sports programs.

Objective

The project aimed to:

- Enhance organizational capacities to foster social inclusion through sports.
- Develop and disseminate innovative volunteer practices that include people with intellectual disabilities.
- Raise awareness about the transformative power of sports in promoting social inclusion.



Impact on Skill Development

Participants, including young people with intellectual disabilities, enhanced their sports skills and learned the value of teamwork and mutual respect.

The project significantly boosted participants' social skills, self-esteem, and community integration.

Success and Innovation



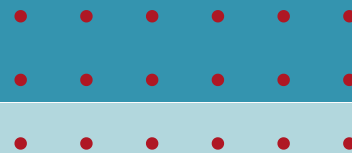
The project's success was marked by the development and adoption of the "Inclusive Volunteering 1+1" practice, now known as "Coming Together." This approach has redefined volunteering within youth sports, making it an active and inclusive engagement tool.

The project's innovative nature lies in its ability to adapt sports to serve as a medium for social action, influencing policy and community practices across multiple countries.



Replicability

This model has proven adaptable and can be implemented in various international contexts, demonstrating that sports can be a universal language for inclusion.



Sustainability

The ongoing involvement of Special Olympics organizations and new partnerships, like those established in Romania with national autism networks, ensure the continued impact and sustainability of inclusive sports practices. These collaborations help maintain the momentum of the project, promoting ongoing community engagement and inclusion.



Impact on Target Groups

The project has fostered an inclusive environment where participants from all backgrounds engage in sports, breaking down barriers and promoting a healthy, integrated community.

The interaction between young people and Special Olympics athletes has been particularly impactful, offering mutual learning opportunities and enhancing community life.

Target Groups

- Young people with and without intellectual disabilities.
- Partner organizations involved in youth and sports activities.
- Young people aged 16 to 29.
- Participants and volunteers from local communities and international partners.



**SPORT FOR
SOCIAL ACTION**

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BOARDING INCLUSION THROUGH GREEN SKILLS (BIGS)

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[Juventud Empoderada](#)

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Website:

<https://juventudemperada.org/>

Country:

Spain

Region of Impact:

Seville and Province, Spain;
Pécs, Hungary



Description

The **BIGS project**, spearheaded by the youth association Juventud Empoderada, focuses on enhancing the **active participation** and **social inclusion** of young people with disabilities. Supported by a consortium that includes partners from **Hungary** and **Greece**, the initiative champions the use of **environmental projects** as a pathway to empowerment. Through the development and implementation of innovative practices, the project strives to integrate young people with disabilities into the community, using green skills and environmental stewardship as primary tools.

Program Details

During a five-day learning mobility event in Seville, participants engaged in **workshops** designed to promote **environmental sustainability** and **personal development**. These activities included creating musical instruments and board games from recycled materials, and discussions centered around European identity and responsible consumption. Participants also prepared meals daily using local, sustainably sourced ingredients, emphasizing the importance of minimizing the environmental impact.

Objective

The BIGS project aims to:

- **Encourage Community Building:** Young participants are encouraged to create and lead their own local community projects that leverage their unique skills to foster social inclusion.
- **Educate on Environmental Protection:** The project seeks to raise awareness about the importance of environmental conservation and teaches young people the skills necessary to advocate for and implement sustainable practices.
- **Promote Active Participation:** By facilitating opportunities for young people with disabilities to engage in meaningful community roles, the project helps them become more active members of society, enhancing their connectivity with peers both with and without disabilities.



Impact on Skill Development



The workshops not only foster **creativity** and **problem-solving** through the construction of musical instruments and board games from recycled materials but also teach participants the importance of **teamwork** and **cooperation**.

The culinary sessions serve as practical lessons in **nutrition** and **sustainable cooking**, reinforcing the principles of **healthy living** and environmental stewardship.

Success and Innovation



The innovative approach of the BIGS project lies in its **integration of environmental sustainability with disability advocacy**, creating a comprehensive program that addresses both social and ecological issues.

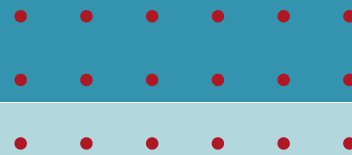
The project has successfully utilized hands-on environmental activities as a medium to enhance the social skills and community involvement of participants, making it a pioneering model in the field of inclusive environmental education.

Replicability



The adaptability of the **BIGS project** makes it a viable model for other regions seeking to integrate social inclusion with environmental education.

Its success in Seville and Hungary demonstrates the project's potential for broad application, encouraging other communities to adopt similar initiatives.



Sustainability

Sustainability of the **BIGS project** is achieved through ongoing collaborations with local and international partners, ensuring a steady flow of resources and support. Continuous engagement with the community helps maintain the relevance and impact of the project, securing its long-term viability.



Impact on Target Groups

Participants of the BIGS project have experienced significant personal growth and development.

The inclusive nature of the project ensures that all young people, regardless of their abilities, are given opportunities to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

This has fostered a greater sense of belonging and achievement among the participants, profoundly impacting their social integration and self-esteem.

Target Groups

- Young individuals with **physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities**
- **Local youth** interested in environmental advocacy
- **Educators** and **community leaders** involved in youth development and environmental education



BOARDING INCLUSION
THROUGH GREEN
SKILLS (BIGS)

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SOLIDARITY IN DIFFABILITIES

Organisation Name:

GESEME 1996 SL

Contact Details:

info@geseme.com

Project Website:

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/2020-1-NL02-KA105-002899>

Country:

The Netherlands, Romania, Greece, North Macedonia, Spain, Türkiye, Bulgaria, Serbia, Poland

Region of Impact:

Gelderland (NL), Constanta (RO), Attiki (GR), Skopski (MK), Barcelona (ES), Karaman and Manisa (TR), Sofia (BG), Serbia (RS), Pomorskie (PL)



Description

"Solidarity in Diffabilities" was a **transnational youth exchange** involving eight countries, designed to foster social inclusion for young individuals with **mental** and **physical disabilities** across Europe. Conducted from July 24th to August 3rd, 2021, the initiative employed **non-formal learning** techniques to enhance **intercultural understanding**, develop **solidarity**, and facilitate friendships among youths.

Program Details

- **Activities:** Participants engaged in various culturally enriching activities, developing communication skills and social confidence. The exchange involved overcoming language barriers and fostering mutual understanding through interactive and inclusive sessions.
- **Challenges:** Initiated amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the program faced significant logistical hurdles, including travel restrictions that affected participant numbers and partner involvement. Despite these challenges, new partnerships formed, adapting the program to ensure continuity and effective engagement.

Objective

The main goal was to empower young people with disabilities to participate actively in societal roles, using cultural exchanges to break down barriers and promote inclusive practices.

Necessary Resources

- **Human resources** were crucial, including skilled facilitators and volunteers who supported the activities.
- **Logistical resources** included accommodations adapted for accessibility, with provisions for local and sustainable food options.



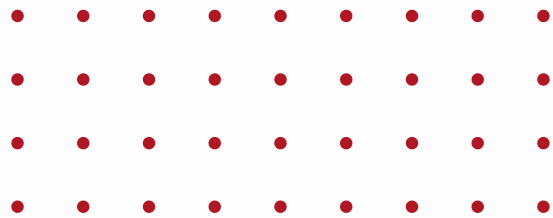
Evolution of the Practice

Despite pandemic-related disruptions, the exchange successfully adapted, maintaining a focus on inclusion and cultural exchange. The program has not been repeated, but it serves as a benchmark for best practices in managing inclusive youth programs under challenging conditions.

Impact on Skill Development

Participants enhanced their multilingual communication abilities and socialization skills.

Young volunteers, especially those with disabilities, took on significant roles, boosting their confidence and leadership capabilities.



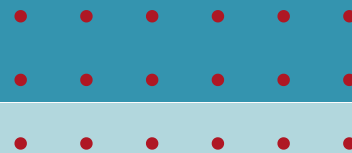
Success and Innovation

This program's innovation lay in its comprehensive approach to inclusivity, actively involving participants with disabilities in all aspects of planning and execution. It highlighted the need for more consistent inclusion in youth projects and provided a replicable model for similar initiatives.



Replicability

The practice's structured approach and focus on cultural and social inclusion make it adaptable for replication in other multicultural settings. Ensuring respect and appropriate support for participants with disabilities is crucial for replication.



Sustainability

The collaborative framework across multiple countries and organizations underpins the program's sustainability, fostering ongoing partnerships and continuous learning among the involved entities.

Target Groups

Participants predominantly ranged **from 18 to 24 years old**, with emotional and cognitive development often corresponding to that of adolescents aged 12 to 16. This group primarily included young individuals living in shared housing under the supervision of professional social workers, or at home. Many were enrolled in specialized educational programs, while others participated in unique activities orchestrated by the partner organizations. Despite facing substantial barriers such as economic constraints, physical and intellectual disabilities, and societal and architectural challenges, these youths displayed a strong motivation to immerse themselves in different cultures, share experiences, and enhance personal skills.

Impact on Target Groups

The Youth Exchange significantly enhanced participants' understanding of inclusion, providing them with practical tools for engaging effectively with diverse groups. It also fostered a supportive network among youth workers, enhancing skills like intercultural communication and teamwork. This network facilitated the sharing of innovative solutions to common challenges, contributing to a broader collective capability.

Participants gained a deeper awareness of isolation and exclusion issues, which was complemented by their active involvement in discussions that introduced fresh perspectives and solutions. The experience not only strengthened their soft skills but also supported personal growth by fostering confidence and initiative through diverse intercultural interactions.

The broader impacts included organizational capacity building for inclusive volunteering activities, enhanced public recognition of the organizations' professional approaches, and expanded networks for future collaborative projects. This comprehensive development helped participants and partner organizations alike to foster a more inclusive, supportive, and dynamic community environment.





PLENA INCLUSIÓN VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM

Organisation Name:

[Plena Inclusión Madrid](#)

Contact Details:

info@plenainclusion.org

Website:

<https://plenainclusionmadrid.org/>

Projekt Website:

[Plena Inclusión Madrid's Project Page](#)

Country:

Spain

Region of Impact:

Comunidad de Madrid



Description

The **Plena Inclusión Volunteering Program** fosters **social inclusion** and **independence** for people with **intellectual disabilities** by actively integrating them into structured volunteer roles. Through meaningful community engagement, participants develop practical skills, contribute to society, and challenge societal perceptions of disability.

The program is part of a **volunteer network** with over **2,700 participants**, offering opportunities tailored to individual interests and abilities. A significant initiative within this framework is the collaboration with [Grandes Amigos](#), an NGO focused on **preventing loneliness among elderly individuals**. This partnership enables people with intellectual disabilities to volunteer in elder care settings, providing companionship and assistance in daily activities.

To ensure accessibility, Plena Inclusión Madrid has **developed easy-to-read training materials**, including a Volunteering Manual, a Commitment Guide, and guidelines for telephone companionship. These resources help volunteers with intellectual disabilities understand their roles and responsibilities, ensuring their successful integration. Since its launch in 2021, the initiative has continued to grow, welcoming new participants and reinforcing its impact on social inclusion and community engagement.

Necessary Resources

The program requires trained mentors, facilitators, and experienced volunteers who provide ongoing support and guidance.

Local partnerships with elder care organizations and NGOs create structured volunteering opportunities. Additional resources include customized training materials, funding for program coordination, and logistical support to ensure volunteers can participate fully.

Evolution of the Practice

Initially designed to place individuals with intellectual disabilities in diverse community roles, the program expanded in 2021 to focus on intergenerational volunteering. Volunteers now participate in structured activities such as **social visits, recreational events, and telephone companionship** with elderly individuals. This expansion has strengthened the program's impact, demonstrating that people with disabilities can play an active role in improving social well-being.



Impact on Skill Development

Participants develop **essential life skills** through their volunteering experiences.

Social and **communication skills** are enhanced as volunteers interact with elderly individuals, mentors, and peers.

Training focuses on **active listening, emotional intelligence, and decision-making**, equipping participants with the **confidence** to navigate their roles effectively. Mentorship ensures volunteers receive continuous support as they gain independence and self-assurance in their responsibilities.

Success and Innovation

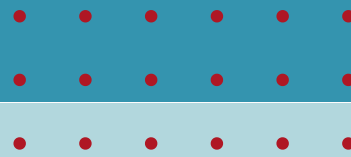


This initiative **challenges the traditional view** of people with intellectual disabilities as **passive beneficiaries of support**, instead positioning them as **active contributors to society**. The development of accessible, **easy-to-read training materials** ensures that volunteers fully understand their responsibilities, increasing their success in their roles. The intergenerational nature of the program fosters mutual learning and support, benefiting both volunteers and elderly individuals through meaningful interactions.

Replicability



The model is highly adaptable to different regions and contexts. The key components — matching volunteers with **suitable roles**, providing **structured training**, and offering **continuous mentorship** — can be replicated in other communities. **Collaborations** with local organizations and **awareness campaigns** ensure successful implementation in various cultural and social settings.



Sustainability

The program’s sustainability is supported by **ongoing funding**, strategic **partnerships**, and an **engaged volunteer network**. The peer mentoring structure fosters long-term growth, as experienced volunteers guide new participants, ensuring continuity. Institutional support and public awareness further reinforce the program’s ability to expand and maintain its impact over time.



Impact on Target Groups

Target Groups

The primary participants are **people with intellectual disabilities** who seek opportunities for community engagement and skill development. The program also benefits **elderly individuals** experiencing social isolation, providing them with companionship and social interaction. Additionally, **mentors, caregivers,** and **community organizations** play a key role in supporting the program, fostering a collaborative approach to inclusion.

For individuals with intellectual disabilities, the program provides a **sense of purpose, skill development,** and **self-confidence**, proving that they can actively contribute to society. The structured mentorship model ensures they receive ongoing support, enabling them to develop **communication, teamwork,** and **problem-solving skills**.

For elderly participants, the initiative offers **companionship**, meaningful social engagement, and **emotional support**, reducing feelings of loneliness. On a broader scale, the program **challenges societal misconceptions** about disability, demonstrating the valuable contributions that people with intellectual disabilities can make within their communities.



PLENA INCLUSIÓN
VOLUNTEERING
PROGRAM

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ACCESSIBLE PATH: EL CAMINO DEL ROCÍO

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[COCEMFE Sevilla](#)

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Website:
<https://cocemfesevilla.es/en/>

Project Website:
[Camino de la Diversidad](#)

Country:
Spain

Region of Impact:
Seville and Huelva



Description

People with disabilities face significant challenges when participating in large cultural and religious gatherings, particularly in rural areas where accessibility is often limited. The **Camino del Rocío pilgrimage**, one of Spain's most **famous religious events**, attracts nearly one million visitors each year, yet its infrastructure remains largely **inaccessible**. Many individuals with disabilities struggle to take part due to architectural barriers, lack of adapted transport, and insufficient support services.

To address these challenges, COCEMFE Sevilla launched an initiative aimed at ensuring that people with disabilities could fully participate in the pilgrimage. The project involved careful **logistical planning, training volunteers**, and **advocating for long-term accessibility improvements**. The first event was held from April 1–3, 2022, following its presentation on February 25 of the same year. Around 200 people took part, including 80 individuals with disabilities.

Volunteers played a key role in the initiative, **assisting with mobility, guiding participants** through the pilgrimage route, and ensuring that **accessibility** needs were met. The project also received extensive media coverage, **raising awareness** about the importance of universal accessibility. As a result, the local City Council made a public commitment to improving accessibility for future editions of the event.

Necessary Resources

The project relied on **collaboration** between public institutions, local councils, religious brotherhoods, and private sponsors. **Volunteers** received specialized training to provide assistance and ensure smooth event operations. The total project budget was €41,000, covering logistics, accessibility measures, and volunteer coordination. **Family members of participants** also played an essential role in supporting attendees with disabilities, while media partnerships helped amplify awareness efforts.

Evolution of the Practice

Following the first **Camino del Rocío**, two volunteers with disabilities, Pepe Fernández and Angel Fernando Mendez, established the association Camino Rocío Sin Barreras.

Since 2022, they have taken over the organization and coordination of the annual event, ensuring that accessibility remains a priority. The association continues to promote volunteering among people with disabilities, empowering them to take on leadership roles and advocate for greater inclusion in public events.

Impact on Skill Development

For people with disabilities, participating in the pilgrimage fosters personal growth, greater independence, and stronger communication skills. Volunteers develop problem-solving abilities and gain experience in working with diverse groups, while caregivers benefit from moments of respite. By engaging in such an event, individuals with disabilities enhance their self-confidence and demonstrate that they can play an active role in society.

The initiative also provided an opportunity for policymakers and community leaders to better understand accessibility challenges. Their direct engagement with participants helped shape future commitments to improving access to public spaces and cultural events.

Success and Innovation

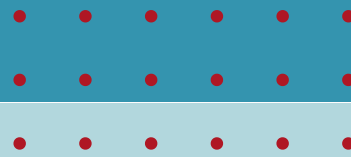
The project stands out for its emphasis on inclusion and empowerment. Rather than treating accessibility as a secondary concern, people with disabilities were actively involved in designing the initiative and identifying the necessary solutions. Their leadership ensured that the event addressed real needs, rather than relying on external assumptions about accessibility.

A key innovation was the active participation of volunteers with disabilities, who not only benefited from the event but also contributed as mentors and role models. Their involvement demonstrated that large-scale cultural events could be adapted to include everyone. The initiative also successfully encouraged political engagement, leading to commitments for future accessibility improvements.

Replicability

The **Camino del Rocío model** can be applied to other cultural or religious events, particularly those with limited accessibility. Its core structure—volunteer coordination, partnerships with local organizations, and advocacy for inclusive infrastructure—can be adapted to different contexts. Accessibility plans developed for this initiative are available as reference materials, making replication easier for other organizations.





Sustainability



The project's sustainability is supported by continued community involvement, institutional backing, and increased public awareness of accessibility issues. Future editions will require fewer infrastructure investments since initial assessments and adaptations have already been made. Partnerships with businesses, disability organizations, and local government bodies will ensure long-term financial and logistical support.

Environmental sustainability has also been considered, with efforts to minimize the carbon footprint of the event through the use of adapted transport and responsible waste management. Expanding participation in future years will help reinforce the importance of universal accessibility and social inclusion.



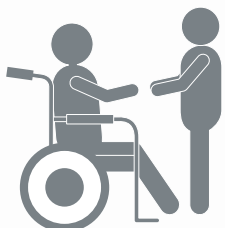
Impact on Target Groups

Target Groups

The primary beneficiaries of the initiative are individuals with disabilities who face physical and logistical barriers to participation in public events. The project also involves volunteers from universities, NGOs, and local communities, fostering collaboration across different sectors and generations.

For participants with disabilities, the event provided an opportunity for increased independence and meaningful social engagement. Volunteers gained hands-on experience in supporting accessibility efforts, deepening their understanding of inclusion. The project also influenced public policy, as commitments were made to improve accessibility measures for future events.

The initiative's visibility contributed to a broader societal shift, encouraging other cultural events to consider accessibility in their planning. As a result, **Camino del Rocío** has become a model for inclusive cultural participation, demonstrating that large-scale events can and should be accessible to all.



ACCESSIBLE PATH: EL
CAMINO DEL ROCÍO

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TRAINING EUROPEAN ACTIVE MENTORS FOR INCLUSIVE VOLUNTEERING

Organisation Name:

[COCEMFE Sevilla](#)

Contact Details:

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Project Website:

<https://cocemfesevilla.es/en/european-programs/team-iv-training-european-active-mentors-for-inclusive-volunteering>

Country:

Spain, Ireland, Belgium, Bulgaria, and Romania

Region of Impact:

Andalusia, mainly the provinces of Seville and Huelva



Description

The **Training European Active Mentors for Inclusive Volunteering** (TEAM IV) project is an Erasmus+ initiative that aims to enhance the participation of people with disabilities in volunteering through structured mentoring programs. Historically, people with disabilities have been positioned primarily as recipients of volunteer work rather than as active contributors. TEAM IV seeks to shift this paradigm by providing tailored mentorship training that empowers them to take on meaningful volunteer roles. The project is coordinated by [Volunteering Ireland](#), in collaboration with key partners across Europe, including [Centre Européen du Volontariat](#) (Belgium), [Asociatia Pro Vobis](#) (Romania), [Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bulgaria Association](#) (Bulgaria), and [COCEMFE Sevilla](#) (Spain).

Necessary Resources

The success of the TEAM IV project depends on a combination of technical expertise, digital infrastructure, and cross-sector partnerships. **Essential resources include:**

- **Research and Development:** Conducting focus groups, producing state-of-the-art reports, and analyzing best practices.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Developing methodologies, creating multilingual training materials, and implementing a digital mentoring platform.
- **Pilot Training Course:** A six-month mentoring program in five countries, engaging 50 mentors and mentees with disabilities.
- **Translation and Accessibility:** Ensuring all content is available in multiple languages for broader reach.
- **Networking and Dissemination:** Hosting transnational mentor training events and a final conference in Brussels to share findings and best practices.



Evolution of the Practice

Since its inception, the project has made substantial progress. In its early stages, research was conducted through focus groups in each partner country, culminating in a **state-of-the-art report on mentoring volunteers with disabilities**. The consortium is now finalizing **training materials**, which will be incorporated into an online mentoring platform. The next phase involves a transnational training event in Ireland, followed by the platform's launch and the full-scale implementation of the mentoring program.



Impact on Skill Development

TEAM IV focuses on **strengthening the skills** of both mentors and mentees. **Mentors** receive training in communication, digital literacy, and inclusive engagement strategies, enabling them to provide effective support. **Mentees** gain confidence, independence, and practical skills to enhance their participation in volunteer activities.

The project aligns with the European Year of Skills initiative, integrating non-formal learning methods to foster problem-solving, adaptability, and teamwork—essential competencies for employability and social inclusion.

Reasons for Success and Innovation

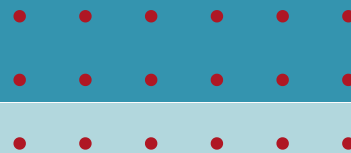


TEAM IV introduces several innovative elements that distinguish it from traditional mentoring programs. The project establishes a **digital mentoring platform** that connects mentors and mentees across Europe, providing training modules, resources, and communication tools. Additionally, it promotes **cross-border collaboration**, incorporating best practices from diverse cultural and institutional settings. By actively involving people with disabilities as mentors, the project **challenges stereotypes** and fosters a more inclusive and participatory approach to volunteering.

Replicability



Given its adaptable structure, TEAM IV has strong potential for replication across various European contexts. The methodology and digital resources developed can be applied by different organizations seeking to improve mentoring programs for volunteers with disabilities. However, for successful replication, it is essential to consider cultural perspectives on disability and volunteering in each region. To support widespread adoption, project partners are engaging with stakeholders, policymakers, and civil society organizations to promote inclusive mentoring at national and EU levels.



Ensuring Sustainability

The sustainability of TEAM IV is secured through multiple strategies:



- **Financial Sustainability:** The project leverages EU funding, national grants, and institutional support to ensure long-term impact.
- **Institutional Sustainability:** By embedding the mentoring framework within established volunteer organizations, the project guarantees its continuation beyond its official timeline.
- **Policy Sustainability:** TEAM IV includes the development of policy recommendations advocating for inclusive volunteering, which will be disseminated across European networks to drive long-term change.
- **Digital Sustainability:** The mentoring platform will remain accessible after the project's completion, offering ongoing training and support to volunteers and mentors.



Impact on Target Groups

The impact of **TEAM IV** is measured through qualitative and quantitative indicators, including participation rates, skill development assessments, and stakeholder engagement levels. Mentors report increased confidence and capacity to support diverse volunteers, while mentees experience greater independence and social inclusion. Partner organizations benefit from enhanced capacity to implement inclusive volunteering programs, contributing to broader structural change. On a larger scale, TEAM IV raises awareness about the need for accessible volunteering opportunities, paving the way for more inclusive policies and initiatives across Europe.

Target Groups

The project targets two primary groups:

- **Volunteer Mentors:** Individuals trained to support and guide volunteers with disabilities, equipping them with the necessary skills to foster inclusive engagement.
- **Volunteers with Disabilities (Mentees):** Participants who receive mentorship and training to increase their involvement in volunteering initiatives. The initiative also extends its outreach to organizations and policymakers, advocating for systemic improvements in inclusive volunteering.



TRAINING EUROPEAN
ACTIVE MENTORS
FOR INCLUSIVE
VOLUNTEERING

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