

Organisation:Sheffield Volunteer Bureau

Project Title:Virtual volunteering and the role of a local Volunteer Bureau

Background Information:

Virtual volunteering is gaining greater recognition in the UK. This project will investigate the role of a local Volunteer Bureau in virtual volunteering.

Virtual volunteering means volunteering activities completed, in whole or part, via the internet or e-mail – either at work or at home. Virtual volunteering is a rapidly expanding area of voluntary work in the United States where it is also known as online volunteering, cyber service, telementoring and teleworking. In the UK virtual volunteering is a relatively new phenomenon and in Sheffield, to our knowledge, no volunteering of this kind currently takes place.

Project Objectives:

This project will investigate the potential for virtual volunteering in Sheffield. In particular the project will consider:

- § What literature is already available regarding virtual volunteering?
- § SWOT analysis for the Volunteer Bureau's involvement in virtual volunteering.
- § What kinds of voluntary work would best be suited to virtual volunteering?
- § What information, training or support would virtual volunteers require?
- § What information, training and support would volunteer co-ordinators require?
- § What safeguards need to be in place to protect the organisation and individual volunteers?

Targets:

It is hoped that, by the end of the project, the student will have developed the following items/activities:

A good practice guideline (max two sides A4), written around virtual volunteering and how to effectively implement it.

A development plan for virtual volunteering for Sheffield, highlighting the role the Volunteer Bureau can play in its development.

Note:

This project is open to negotiation with the student(s) taking part, so that both the student(s) and Sheffield Volunteer Bureau gain something worthwhile from the opportunity.

Additional opportunities may well arise during the project to add value to the project and student development. In previous projects this has included presentation skills training, job shadowing and social activities.

Resources Provided by the Organisation:

- Information about virtual volunteering in the United States
- Background information to the Volunteer Bureau
- Local, national and international research about volunteering
- Contact with staff and volunteers in Voluntary Action Sheffield
- Links to volunteer co-ordinators in Sheffield
- Resources including phone, fax, photocopying etc.
- Office space
- Support from the Volunteer Bureau Manager

Directions to Company :

City Centre, 5 - 10 minute walk from the University main campus

Transport Issues (if any):

The organisation can only offer travel expenses for visits to groups and organisations within the city.

Confidentiality/ Sensitive issues (if any):

The final report produced by the student(s) must protect the identity of current and potential volunteers and any organisations with which the Volunteer Bureau works.

Other notes/Useful Information:

A range of background information is available from the Sheffield Volunteer Bureau.