ThessVolunteer

Everything you need to know about volunteering

(A guide for volunteers' coordinators)

ThessVolunteer

SOLIDARITY NOW

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Development and design
Athanasia Papingi
Giorgos Tsitiridis

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Introduction

The guide was created in the framework of the project "ThessVolunteer" which is being implemented with the support of the John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation.

This guide aims to highlight good practices of voluntary processes in both existing voluntary opportunities and new initiatives.

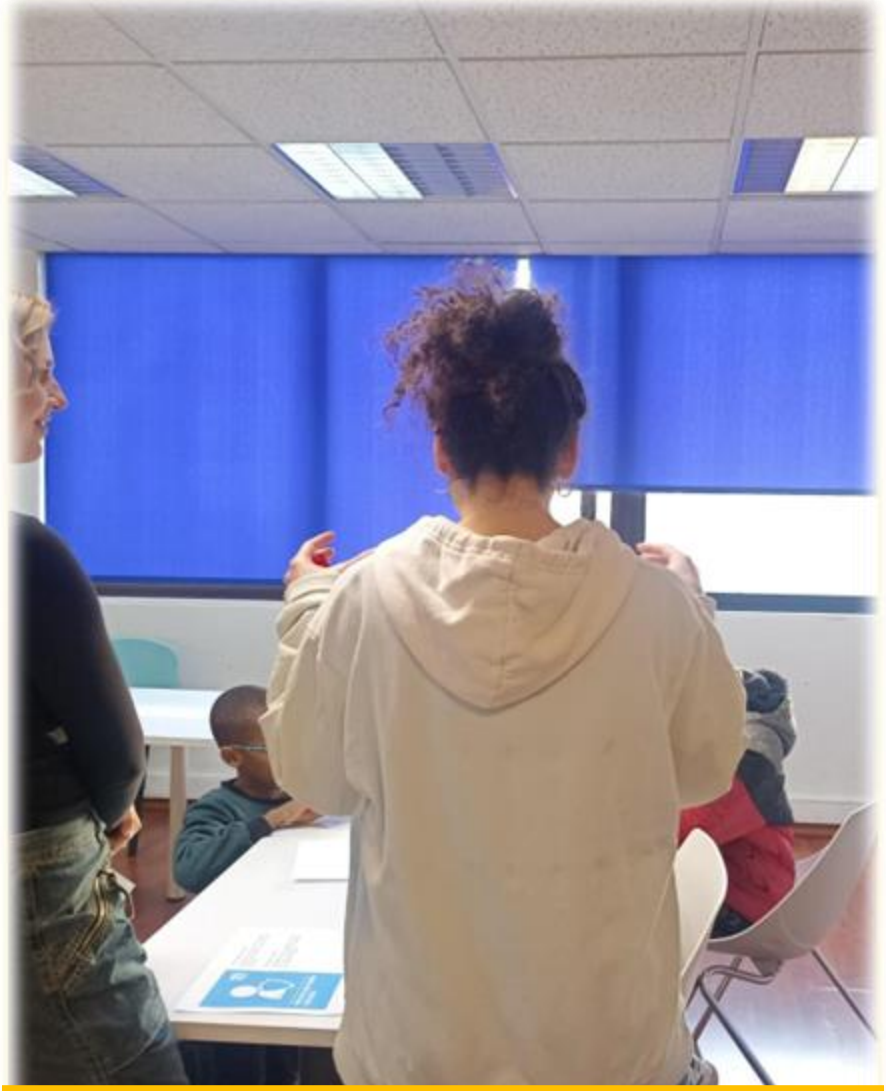
Discovering Volunteerism

At a glance

Volunteerism

Voluntary Initiatives / Volunteering in Existing Opportunities

Nowadays, volunteerism can take many forms. The coordinators play an important role in this process. Traditional forms of volunteer coordinating include the management of volunteer work within existing structures and institutions. However, contemporary forms of volunteer coordinating allow coordinators to lead the volunteer network in initiatives. They, also, encourage new ideas and strengthen communities.



Volunteer Coordinators

Key Duties and Responsibilities of the Coordinator

Recruiting and Engaging Volunteers

1. Find and recruit suitable volunteers.
2. Interview and select volunteers.

Training and Guidance

1. Organize training programs.
2. Provide ongoing guidance and support.

Activities' Management and Coordination

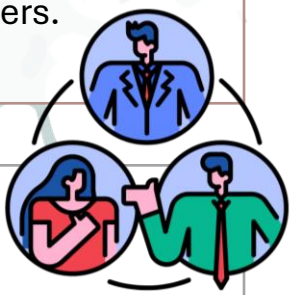
1. Plan and manage volunteer programs.
2. Supervise daily activities.

Evaluation and Feedback

1. Monitor the performance of the volunteers.
2. Provide regular feedback.

Conflict resolution

1. Address conflict and problem-solve.
2. Manage conflicts between volunteers.



Building a strong volunteers' network

Partnerships

Personal networks

Social Media/Website

Trainings/Workshops

Network strengthening through partnerships

Partnering with local institutions and organizations increases the visibility and impact of activities. The exchange of resources and knowledge helps to achieve common goals. Moreover, creating synergies strengthens both parties.

Network strengthening through social media

Using social media platforms can attract new volunteers and spread the word about activities. By creating engaging and attractive content, participation and interaction are encouraged. The organization of online events and campaigns can also raise awareness.

Network strengthening through personal networks

Encouraging volunteers to invite friends and acquaintances strengthens the whole network of volunteers. The use of personal references increases credibility and loyalty. Creating a community of support based on personal relationships and contacts strengthens volunteers' commitment.

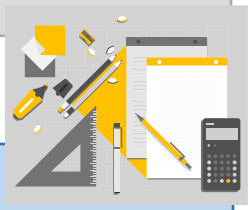
Network strengthening through workshops for the public

The organization of workshops and seminars open to public is a magnet for new stakeholders. Training and informing the participants about the importance of volunteering increases the interest of potential volunteers. Creating opportunities for direct participation and engagement strengthens the network.

Training / Educational Programs

Training Objectives

- **Information about the organization: Providing information about the organization's mission, vision, and values.**
- **Development of basic skills: Training in the skills necessary for volunteer work.**
- **Understanding of roles and responsibilities: Explanations of the duties and responsibilities of each volunteer.**



Training Methodology

- **Workshops and seminars: In-person or online workshops and seminars, covering theoretical and practical topics.**
- **Audiovisual material: Use of videos, presentations, and other multimedia to enhance education.**
- **Guidance and mentoring: Assign more experienced volunteers to play the roles of mentors for newer volunteers.**

Strategies for Continuing Education

Objectives of Continuing Education

- Ongoing Development of Skills: Awareness and development of the new skills that are gained.
- Professional Development: Preparation of volunteers for professional opportunities and development.

Strategies of Continuing Education

- Annual Seminars and Workshops: Offer advanced seminars and workshops regularly.
- Certified Training Programs: Provision of certificates for completion of training programs.
- E-learning: Creation of and access to online learning platforms.

Implementation Methods

- Skills Workshops: Focused on specific skills such as project management, leadership, and communication.
- Guidance and Coaching: Personal sessions with specialists for the development of professional goals.
- Online Courses and Webinars: Access to educational material and online lectures.

Evaluation and Feedback

- Regularly monitor the progress of volunteers and provide constructive feedback.

Challenges

Challenge	Description	Impact	Solution	Description of Solution
Lack of resources	Limited financial and material resources.	Reduced possibility of providing quality education and support.	Search for funding.	Submit funding applications.
Time management	Difficulty with the time management of the volunteers and the coordinator	Inadequate organization and coordination of the activities.	Effective organization	Better preparation.
Lack of mobilization	Reduced motivation and interest from the volunteers.	Reduced participation and efficiency of activities.	Encourage participation	Create a welcoming and supportive community.
Lack of specialized skills	Volunteers lack the necessary training and expertise.	Inadequate performance and not achieving the objectives of activities.	Continuous education	Offer seminars and workshops.
Difficulty in communication	Lack of communication between coordinator and volunteers.	Misconce-ptions and delays.	Improve communi-cation.	Establish regular meetings and use digital tools of communication.

Conflicts

Conflict management

1. Investigate the cause of the conflict
2. Decide on the way to address the conflict
3. Talk with each of the people who are in conflict separately
4. Keep in mind the intense emotions that may have been created
5. Listen carefully
6. Face the situation by emphasizing the objectives of the organization

Providing
motivation

Method	Description	Impact
Personal Development	Provide opportunities for training, developing skills, and professional and vocational training.	Increased loyalty and engagement due to the professional development of the volunteers.
Creative Activities	Create and assign tasks that are interesting and challenging.	The volunteers feel more involved and satisfied with their contributions.
Social Opportunities	Organize social events and meetings, as well as group events and activities.	Establishment of connections and a sense of community between volunteers.
Flexible Program	Adjust volunteering hours to the volunteers' personal needs.	Volunteers can combine volunteering with other commitments. As a result, their commitment is increased.

Motivating volunteers

Volunteers should…

Be consistent.

Know their role and tasks.

Ask for help whenever they feel they need it.

Be safe to say “NO” if they cannot or do not want to do something.

Consider their limits.

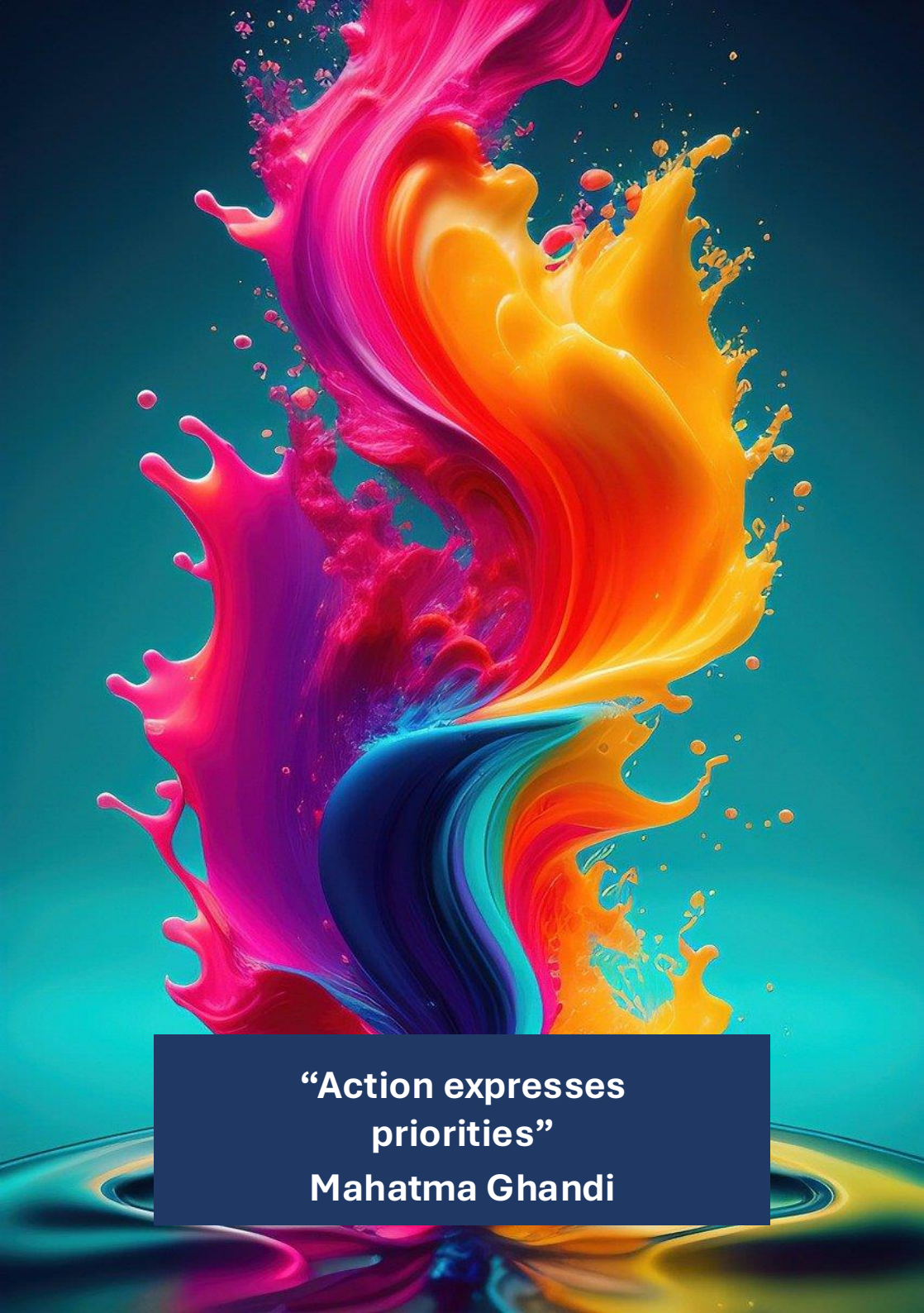
Communicate with the staff if they notice any offensive behavior.

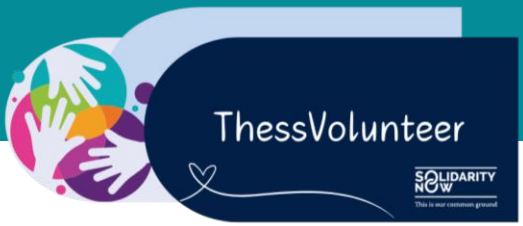
Always ask for permission to take photos, especially when a minor person appears in it.

Volunteers should **not**...

- Arrange external meetings with the program's beneficiaries.
- Display any form of behavior that can be considered offensive.
- Accept or offer personal gifts of monetary value.
- Advise on a topic they are not familiar with, e.g., immigration and asylum procedures.
- Hide a mistake they made. There are solutions for everything.
- Be incredibly upset if a beneficiary discloses a personal story.
- Promise to keep secret a serious issue that has come to their attention.

Moments


“Action expresses priorities”
Mahatma Ghandi



Implementation by

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