CampusEngage

Student
Volunteering
Report 2019

"There is no greater satisfaction than realising you have made a difference to the life of someone else."

Student Volunteering
Report 2019

Volunteers come from all age groups and from all walks of life with a common desire to give back to their community by giving their time. Volunteering takes place across all parts of society including education, social services, sports, health, environment and more.

Volunteering can be a really good route for personal development, helping to learn and develop a greater understanding of the broader world. These opportunities can help bring positive change to the communities they are situated in, allowing volunteers to share their skills and experience in a way that helps those who value the assistance.

Volunteering can provide excellent opportunities for students to round out their higher education with practical experience and opportunities to develop skills such as leadership, teamwork, communication and real-world problem-solving.

There are multiple routes for volunteers to take when volunteering, and for students who wish to volunteer **studentvolunteer.ie** is the one-stop shop that facilitates thousands of students volunteering each year.

studentvolunteer.ie was developed in 2016 through the Campus Engage network of higher education institutions, and currently has 10 member institutions. This online platform matches third level students' interests with a range of volunteering opportunities. The portal is the first of its kind globally and aims to enhance student's awareness of their role and responsibility in solving societal challenges such as homelessness and social exclusion.

There are now more than 1000 organisations and 14,000 students registered on the website, with over 4,000 new student registrations in the 2018-19 academic year. Through this website, students have contributed so much over the last academic year, clocking up a total of 58,202 hours through volunteering opportunities on the website.

studentvolunteer.ie
in numbers 2018-19

STUDENT VOLUNTEER.IE

1,000+
ORGANISATIONS REGISTERED TO DATE

14,000+
STUDENTS REGISTERED TO DATE

4,020
NEW STUDENT REGISTRATIONS

58,202
VOLUNTEERING HOURS LOGGED

3,391
OPPORTUNITIES SUCCESSFULLY VOLUNTEERED FOR

DCU — **514** students registered in total including 102 new registrations this year

Trinity College Dublin — **326** (114 new this year)

INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRALEE — **218** (42 new this year)

T DUBLIN — **988** (304 new this year)

LIT — **383** (237 new this year)

UCC University College Cork, Ireland — **1,940** (787 new this year)

Maynooth University — **63** (36 new this year)

UCD University College Dublin — **1,910** (557 new this year)

NUI Galway — **3,156** (591 new this year)

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK — **4,989** (1250 new this year)

Spotlight on
Student
Volunteers

Dublin City University

Localise

Localise is a youth and community development organisation that allows students, together with young people, to learn about the needs of their local area, and decide how to make a real impact in the community.

DCU students have volunteered with Localise for 6 years, with an average of 25 students mentoring 100 young people annually. Through Localise DCU students have given 2,250 hours for local communities, with an approximate value of €22,500, applying minimum wage to these hours.

In 2018 recognising that many people were sleeping rough leading up to Winter, DCU students were able to gather supplies for 50 care packages for Dublin Simon Community to deliver them onto the streets where they were needed.

Hannah Leonard (20) is a Physics with Biomedical Science student from DCU. She encountered Localise in primary school and eventually became an adult leader in the programme, guiding young people into volunteering.

"I find nothing more enjoyable than making someone's life a little, or hopefully a lot, easier. It is so simple to make a difference in somebody's life whether it be a passing moment in their day or something they remember for years to come."

Institute of Technology Tralee

Conor O'Brien starting volunteering in secondary school by joining the Student Council. On leaving school Conor moved on to volunteering with the Events Society in IT Tralee as its secretary, and then founded the Spark Society, the first mental health awareness society on campus.

College volunteering has helped Conor to develop his confidence, allowing him to tackle new and greater challenges. In 2019 he was the IT Tralee President's Civic Spirit Gold Award winner.

"The society was so committed to the topic that it was absolutely fantastic working with a dedicated team. I enjoy developing the society's community to grow and develop into something more than it is. Perseverance and consistency are key for individual volunteering, seeing it through to the end no matter what. When working in a team, getting to know your team outside the volunteering experience is so important to help build a good team dynamic."

Limerick Institute of Technology

Over the years LIT students have contributed thousands of hours on and off campus. Volunteering provides a unique opportunity for students to help make a difference to their local community, their college experience and their own self-worth. Luke Hogan, a 3rd year Law and Taxation Student in LIT is one example of the student volunteers in LIT.

Luke started volunteering while in Primary School as part of the Go4IT Programme which brought the local community and LIT together to help broaden the views of young people about third level education.

For Luke volunteering provides a great opportunity to meet people of different ages and backgrounds, with similar interests and to feel part of a community. He feels that volunteers can get great satisfaction from helping different groups of people, knowing you can make a difference in their lives. Volunteering for Luke helped to push him out of his comfort zone, boosting his confidence and allowing him to grow both personally and professionally.

"Volunteering has been an integral part of my journey from primary school up to 3rd year in LIT, I feel it is payback time. Volunteering has helped me develop skills and gain work experience which have also been motivating factors. It has helped mould me into the person I am today."

Maynooth University

Rahela Beghean started volunteering two years ago for SVP Sunshine House which led to a 'chain reaction' that led her to seek other volunteering, such as with the local hospital, helping Maynooth Access Programme (MAP) students settle into university life, and Gaisce The President's Award.

Working with different groups of people and volunteers has honed her communication, teamworking and leadership skills. The variety of people encountered through volunteering has made her more understanding of different backgrounds and abilities.

"Not only does it look good on your CV but the skills and the personal growth one can gain from volunteering is endless. Push yourself out of your comfort zone and you would be amazed at yourself, the potential you have and the impact you can have in your communities."

"The positive impact is clear when a child approaches you after a Summer volunteering programme and says 'I have had the best summer ever, you've made it so fun!' The sense of knowing that just by doing a few little things with a child has had a major impact on their childhood."

Her advice to new volunteers would be to 'just go for it'!

NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

National University of Ireland Galway

Michelle Mitchell is a mature access student and dedicated volunteer, earning the NUI Galway ALIVE Certificate in recognition of her volunteering efforts.

Michelle's volunteering centres around organisations that offer mental health, physical and intellectual disability supports. Michelle identified a gap in resources for families who have children with special needs, chronic illness and disabilities, and developed the Special Heroes Ireland initiative that provides educational and recreational activities in Galway. As an ISPCC volunteer for five years Michelle has been a listening volunteer for youth fostering positive mental health.

Michelle is currently undertaking her PHD with the School of Education at NUI Galway researching the lived experiences of deaf children in Ireland. On campus, Michelle is a strong advocate for diversity and inclusion and helped to establish the 'Minceirs Whiden' society for Traveller students.

"Volunteering is a great opportunity to meet new people, and learn how to work together. I gained a great sense of wellbeing and was able to use the experience to develop both personally and professionally."

Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

Trinity College Dublin

Rachel Skelly first brought the topic of consent to the forefront of the TCD Student's Union (SU) in 2015, taking negative personal experiences in her life and channelling them into a positive way of impacting her fellow students and Irish society.

As Gender Equality Officer for the SU Rachel established the topic of consent through an SU information campaign, and oversaw its growth into the amazing workshops and training now present. What started out as a stand in the Arts Building, blossomed into a college-wide campaign with thousands of students attending the workshops. These workshops have become an internationally renowned model for consent education in higher education.
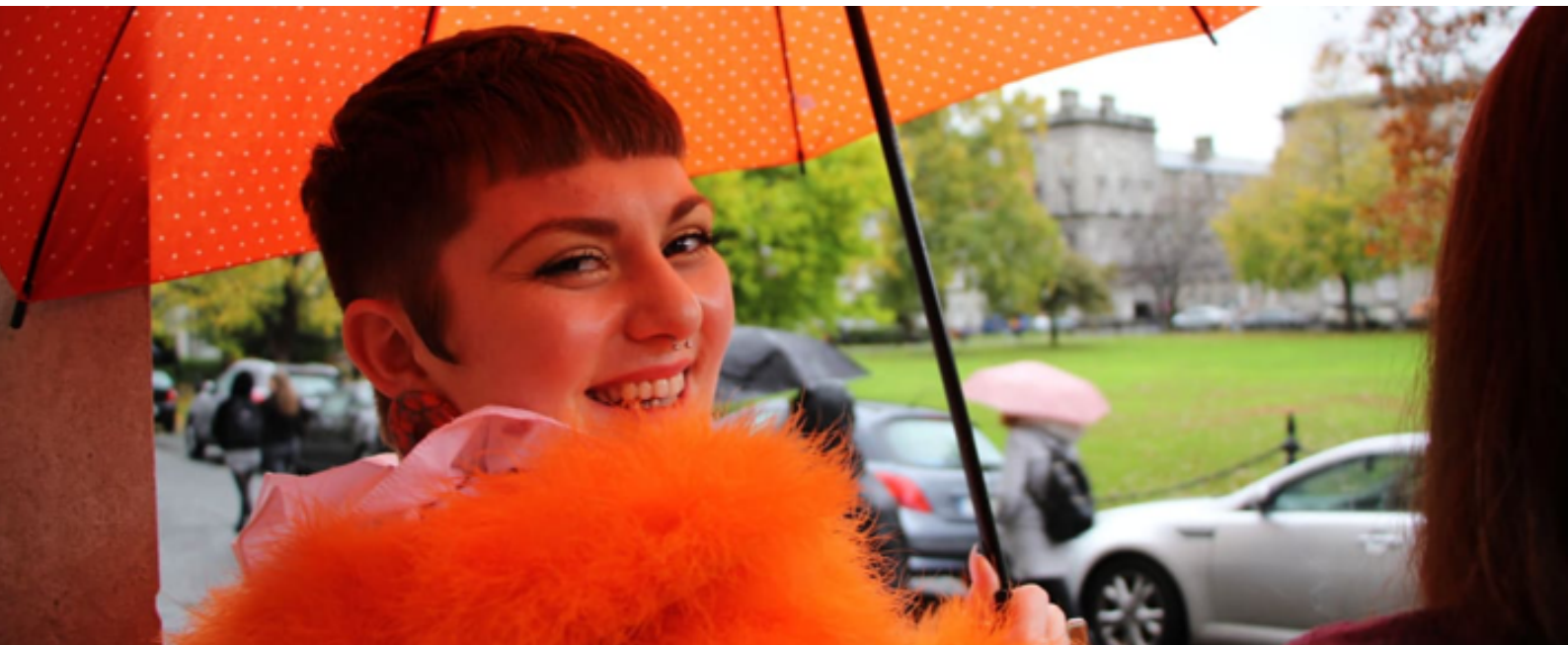
Throughout her undergraduate years, Rachel has worked with the SU, the Student Counselling Service, and the Senior Tutor's Office to maintain the progress of the consent workshops, working during the summer to develop content and to ensure they were relevant to student life.

Focusing workshop content on LGBTQIA+ sexual identities and reducing content around alcohol use allowed the workshops to be responsive to the changing dynamics of the college community. This allows students to fully engage with the content and ensures the success of the workshop, meaning the workshops have moved from being an oddity to being a national point of discussion, creating new norms of sexual education in Ireland. Because of the work that has been done over the last four years, students across the country can more easily find consent workshops available to them.

Technological University Dublin

Evin Hughes, a Computer and Communications Engineering graduate, first experienced volunteering through fundraising with Special Olympics Ireland and working with a school catering for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

At TU Dublin before his first lecture took place, he was volunteering as part of the TU Dublin river clean up thinking it would be a great way to make some new friends, and throughout his time at TU Dublin he has volunteered with various societies

Being Chairperson of TU Dublin Student Volunteering and Vice-Chairperson of the TU Dublin Mental Health Society taught him a huge amount about leadership and organisation. While he was Volunteering Chairperson, TU Dublin's societies managed to raise over €30,000 for various charities. He says that being part of this, the sense of achievement and the camaraderie is what sustains you when volunteering. His skills and experience from volunteering proved hugely valuable when he travelled with three other TU Dublin students to Thailand to represent Ireland at the 2017 Universal Student Leadership Symposium, organised by the United Nations.

"Volunteering is a great opportunity to do some amazing things and meet some amazing people. You get to learn and achieve a lot, and it's an incredibly fulfilling experience!"

UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

University College Cork

University of Sanctuary and Better Together

In 2019 UCC was awarded the MacJannet Prize from the Talloires Network for its University of Sanctuary initiative, which establishes UCC as a place of sanctuary and welcome for asylum seekers.
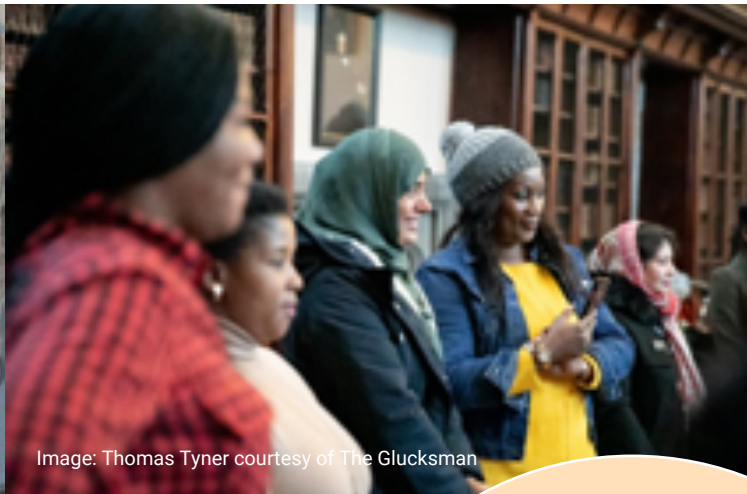

Image: Gerard McCarthy

Image: Thomas Tyner courtesy of The Glucksman

University of Sanctuary Committee member, Vera Stojanovic, is a UCC 2nd year Social Science student and founder of BetterTogether; a student run charity that works to improve the social and emotional wellbeing of women seeking asylum in Co Cork.

Volunteering has taught Vera many skills, from organising events, recruiting and managing volunteers, fundraising, networking, and crucially the skills to help get charitable status for the organisation.

UCC through the Quercus scholarship program and the University of Sanctuary initiative has allowed Vera access to valuable supports and resources that helped support programmes run by BetterTogether. Working with UCC allows the charity access to a group of volunteers with a diverse set of skills and experience. Recently student volunteers implemented an employment skills training course, which had over 40 women asylum seekers participating.

"There is no greater satisfaction than realising you have made a difference to the life of someone else. Giving your time to help others is giving a piece of yourself, it is food for the soul."

University College Dublin

Andrea Whelton first joined UCD Volunteers Overseas (UCDVO) in 2016, taking part in a four-week education project in Ruaha, Tanzania, teaching computer literacy and English to teachers in a primary school. Enjoying the project so much, she returned the following year in a leadership role, overseeing a group of 14 volunteers.

Wanting to continue her volunteering back home, Andrea joined Enactus UCD, a group of students, academics and business leaders that develop social enterprise to help solve societal problems. Through Enactus, she volunteered with HeadstARTS, a project that provides art, drama, music and dance classes to people with intellectual disabilities.

Fast-forward to today and Andrea is focusing her volunteering in her local community and seeing what change she can make locally. Volunteering has helped her to develop a broad range of skills: self-confidence, teamwork, problem-solving, leadership, planning, adaptability and much more.

It has also allowed her to learn about different experiences and cultures, as she has worked with diverse groups from all over the world.

"I think volunteering has also allowed me to look at the world in a different way, and be more conscious of the social problems that exist in the world. Volunteering has been my favourite part of my time being in college, and I wouldn't change my experience at all."

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

University of Limerick

President's Volunteer Award (PVA)

The Community Liaison Office (CLO) at the University of Limerick supports and promotes strong and meaningful links with internal and external clubs, societies, organisations and communities on and off campus. The CLO is committed to enhancing the experience of students and our internal and external communities through emancipatory based civic engagement principles, activities and practices.

In 2010, the President's Volunteer Award (PVA) was established through the CLO. The PVA mirrors UL's 'Home of Firsts' culture and it is the first higher education student volunteer programme to formally acknowledge volunteering as significant in the life of our students and the contribution they make to their internal and external communities during the course of their academic studies.

As such the PVA's robust criteria ensures that UL student volunteers commit to their chosen club, society, organisation and communities for a period of time as well as reflecting on this commitment and volunteer practice. A structured and resourced HE volunteer programme like the PVA in addition to the on-line management system **studentvolunteer.ie** is a powerful example of meaningful and mutually beneficial HEI/community collaborations.

To-date
over 2,300
UL students have been awarded the PVA after contributing more than
137,000 volunteer hours to over 400 voluntary clubs, societies, organisations and communities.