

## £4 million grants to boost volunteering among over 50s

With life expectancy in the UK increasing, a valuable opportunity has opened up for greater numbers of volunteers to share their skills and talents with others in later life - offering a rewarding experience for both sides.

The Office for Civil Society and Nesta, the innovation foundation, have announced three new grant funds totalling £4 million to explore how more charities and public services can better tap into the skills and experience of volunteers over 50 for the benefit of all society. The three grant funds are the first to be funded by government through the second phase of the Centre for Social Action and will be managed by Nesta.

Older volunteers already make an important contribution in supporting our hospitals, schools and local councils, and in roles such as magistrates, first aiders and youth club leaders. As people live longer and research shows volunteering can contribute to wellbeing in later life, these new funds will explore how more can be encouraged to volunteer and how their talents and experiences can be retained.

The three funds now open to application are:

- **The Second Half Fund - Sharing Time and Talents for Life:** Will provide grants of up to £250,000 to support the growth of new ways of mobilising the time and talents of people aged over 50 specifically in support of: children and young people, parents and families, ageing well, creating resourceful and resilient local places.
- **Join In Stay In:** Will award grants of up to £50,000 and significant non-financial support from behavioural science experts for organisations to undertake Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) to understand what works best to encourage volunteers to continue to give their time regularly.
- **Give More Get More - Exploring Intensive Volunteering:** Grants of up to £100,000 to support organisations to trial intensive volunteering placements for people over 50 - approaching or in retirement - that work alongside public services. These might include 'gap years', such as those VSO offers for experienced volunteers to give their time abroad.

The launch of these new funds follows on from the Centre for Social Action Innovation Fund, a programme of work from Nesta and The Office for Civil Society that mobilised volunteers to work alongside public services. The three year programme rallied more than 70,000 people to help 176,000 people including helping the unemployed get back into work, peer mentoring for young people online and imparting emergency lifesaving skills to high risk young people.

Minister for Civil Society, Rob Wilson, said:

"These funds represent an excellent opportunity to replicate our fantastic achievements in youth volunteering and I urge as many organisations as possible to apply. The funds will encourage more people over the age of 50 to follow the example of their children and grandchildren, get out in their communities and help us build a Britain that works for everyone."

For more information and to apply please visit the Nesta website [1].

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