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£870,000 vcashpoint grants available to fund youth-led community projects

From 5th December, International Volunteer Day, v, the youth volunteering charity in partnership with HSBC Bank, is opening the next three grant application rounds of the £1 million vcashpoint initiative which enables young people to set up their own community projects.

From 5th December 2007, young people aged 16 to 25 across England can apply for a grant of up to £2,500 as part of vcashpoint, a youth-led initiative which aims to inspire youth volunteering by helping young people tap into their passions and concerns to create activities which meet the needs of their local communities.

vcashpoint has been designed and developed by v20, v's youth advisory board. The first round of vcashpoint grants was awarded earlier this year, with 72 successful applicants securing £130,000 of grants. Now a further three rounds of grants are being announced with £870,000 available, which is anticipated to fund 300 to 400 additional projects.

Application deadlines for the forthcoming rounds of funding are as follows:

- 1 February 2008 (Round 2)
- 25 April 2008 (Round 3)
- 18 July 2008 (Round 4)

From 5th December, the full vcashpoint application details can be found at www.vinspired.com.

Terry Ryall, v Chief Executive, believes that encouraging young people's creativity and ideas can have wide-ranging benefits: "Young people can offer valuable insight into the needs of their local community. We have already experienced phenomenal enthusiasm and creativity from young people who are passionate about setting up their own volunteering project to help tackle local issues. This next stage of vcashpoint will enable hundreds more youth-led projects to take place, benefiting individuals and communities across the country."

Joanna Theodoulou from v20, v's youth advisory board, says youth volunteering is a powerful resource: "vcashpoint is truly different. It is designed by young people for young people to give us the chance to take fantastic ideas and really make a difference. The vcashpoint grants mean young people can design a volunteering project around their own interests, such as sports or art, and make an impact whilst having fun and learning new skills."

Samantha Thorne, Regional Manager of HSBC in the Community, Southern Division, said: "Match Fund is a superb way for volunteers, charities and the private sector to work together. Through our partnership with v we have been able to access valuable expertise and have been inspired by the level of commitment and enthusiasm shown by v20 and all the young people who have been involved so far. We look forward to seeing the new project ideas in the next three rounds of vcashpoint."

As part of the announcement v will also be providing youth workers with an updated brainstorming kit – 'Outside the Box' to and help turn creative volunteering ideas into reality. It will be available on www.wearev.com on 5th December.

vcashpoint projects from round one of the funding have met a wide variety of local community needs, including:

- Co-ordinating football training and a tournament for disadvantaged young people
- Arranging fun and educational trips for children with special needs
- Improving communal leisure areas on a housing estate

- ENDS -

Media enquiries: contact v PR manager Pippa Light on 020 7960 7018 or pippa.light@wearev.com. Or Katie Peden at Geronimo Communications on 020 7299 8651 or katie.peden@geronimocommunications.com

Photography: photographs of two vcashpoint Round 1 projects are available on request.

- CY On Air: Chinese Radio project based in London
- Food and Farming: educational project for primary school children based in Oldham near Manchester

Case Study: CY On Air – a case study of a vcashpoint Round 1 funded project (Chinese radio), is available on request. Interviews with the young volunteer responsible for the project can also be arranged.

Notes to Editor

- **v** is the youth volunteering charity launched in May 2006 whose mission is to inspire a new generation of young volunteers in England aged 16-25. **v** is supported by the Office of the Third Sector in the Cabinet Office.
- The charity was set up to implement the recommendations of the Russell Commission outlining a new national framework for youth action and engagement, following a nationwide consultation which included 6000 young people.
- **v** is led by the cares, interests, passions and beliefs of young people. A Youth Advisory Board made up of twenty young people called **v20** is involved in all aspects of the charity's work. Four members of **v20** sit on **v**'s Board of Trustees.
- **v** works with and builds upon the current voluntary sector infrastructure, funds the creation of volunteering opportunities through grants rounds and implements programmes to create awareness and positive understanding of volunteering for young people. For more information on **v**, visit www.wearev.com
- HSBC Bank has committed £500,000 over two years to **vcashpoint** as part of the **v** Match Fund programme – a unique initiative by which **v** accesses government funds to match up to 100% of private sector donations to youth volunteering projects.