



vinspiredstudents

Compelling new research reveals the positive impact of student volunteering

As **v**, **The National Young Volunteers' Service** gets ready to launch a nationwide tour of universities and further education colleges, a preview of compelling new research* confirms the positive impact of volunteering on students and the wider community, with 63% of students actively volunteering themselves and 87% of student volunteers saying that they would recommend it to their peers.

Further results from the wide-ranging research commissioned by the NCCPE and delivered by the Institute for Volunteering Research revealed that 85% of students said that engaging in volunteering increased their communication skills; 77% said that it increased their understanding of other people and 83% said it increased their skills for potential employment. The findings highlight that students broaden the diversity and size of an organisation's volunteer pool, and that these organisations see universities as valuable repositories of talent, time and enthusiasm.

The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement's **vinspired students** programme was set up to investigate the impact of volunteering on students, communities and institutions and to demonstrate the unique contribution that universities can make to their local community through the strategic management of volunteering. The research also discovered that two thirds (67%) of volunteers surveyed said that volunteering whilst at university increased their willingness to volunteer in the future.

David Owen - Research and Development Manager for **vinspired students** said:

"The research confirms that student volunteering and experiential learning does indeed enrich a student's subject knowledge and develops more versatile graduates who are more ready for the employment market and future volunteering engagement. However, the findings come at a time where many of the volunteering programmes established at universities and students' unions are facing uncertain futures regarding funding."



On 28 September, **v**, The National Young Volunteers' Service, will launch a tour of universities and further education colleges, offering free expert advice and workshops to help students across the country improve their CVs and use volunteering to help them get ahead in today's tough employment climate.

The double-decker **bigv**bus will visit over a dozen venues, running workshops by leading brands and inspirational companies, such as Red Bull and ColaLife and will include an 'Insider Tips' session with career specialists Bright Futures, sharing advice on job hunting, interview techniques and giving the low down on what companies are *really* looking for in new recruits.

Terry Ryall CEO for **v**, The National Young Volunteers Service says:

"I'm delighted that this new research reveals the positive impact of volunteering in the student community and shows how it can develop a culture of lifelong volunteering. Student volunteers contribute significantly to university life and the wider community through the hours they volunteer with groups and organisations as well as the informal help they offer."

"With the economic climate making it increasingly difficult to find work, volunteering can also ensure that young people can develop essential new skills to help them find future employment."

Since its launch in May 2006, **v** has worked with over 500 charities and community organisations to create over 960,000 youth volunteering opportunities, including everything from sports coaching and fund raising, to film making and helping to put on a major music festival.

For more information about **v**, The National Young Volunteers' Service, a preview of the new research 'Bursting the Bubble: Students, Volunteering and the Community' or details about the forthcoming **bigv**bus university tour, please contact:

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Notes to editors:

About v

v, The National Young Volunteers Service, aims to inspire a new generation of volunteers (aged 14-25) across England.

Big Society is what we do. We do it by creating a diverse range of volunteering and social action opportunities to help young people take action to improve lives, communities and the planet.

v's aim is to create a culture where volunteering and social action comes naturally and where the benefits of volunteering are understood and celebrated.

v is an independent charity launched in May 2006



See www.vinspired.com for more information on what we do and how we do it.

About the Institute for Volunteering Research

The report is authored by a team led by Dr Georgina Brewis at the Institute for Volunteering Research. The research gathered views from over 4,000 students and more than 6,000 graduates across six case study universities selected as representative of the higher education sector in England. The research adopts a peer-led participatory methodology to enhance the relevance and ownership of research. An important outcome of the study is the development of a series of tools and case studies that will allow other groups to adapt the methodology of this project.

About The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement

The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement advises and supports universities across the UK to value and develop their public engagement work, and embed it into their core practice.

Funded by the UK Higher Education Funding Councils, Research Councils UK, and the Wellcome Trust as part of the Beacons for Public Engagement project, our vision is of a higher education sector making a vital, strategic and valued contribution to 21st-century society through its public engagement activity. Public engagement describes the many ways that the activity and benefits of higher education and research is shared with, and informed by, the public.

The Beacons for Public Engagement is made up of:

- Six beacons which are university based collaborative centres that help support, recognise, reward and build capacity for public engagement work. The beacons are based in : Newcastle and Durham, Manchester, CUE East (UEA), UCL, Wales and Edinburgh.
- The NCCPE which co-ordinates, captures, shares and promotes learning between the beacons, and across higher education institutions, research institutes and more widely.

Our work is further supported by **v**, the National Young Person's charity who have funded the vinspired students project, which seeks to raise the profile and support for student engagement.

You can find out more about our work at www.publicengagement.ac.uk. In December 2010 we are launching a manifesto that universities can sign to declare their support and intentions around public engagement. In addition we will be providing targeted resources and support to help universities and students develop their work in this area.

About the University Tour

Accrington & Rossendale College	20 October	North West
Blackpool and Fylde College	19 October	North West



Brunel University	1 October (TBC)	London
Cambridge Regional College	28 September	East
Carshalton College	1 November (TBC)	London
City of Wolverhampton College	29 September	West Midlands
City of Sunderland College	12 October	North East
Derby University	3 November	East Midlands
Leeds University	4 November	Yorkshire
Liverpool Community College	21 October	North West
Royal Holloway University	30 September	South East
Surrey University	26 October	South East
Warwick University	29 October (TBC)	West Midlands
York University	5 Nov	Yorkshire