



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

THINKING OF VOLUNTEERING?

A Step-by-Step Guide to Volunteering
for NUI Galway Students



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www.nuigalway.ie/alive

What is volunteering?

Volunteering is giving your time free of charge to a community. As an NUI Galway student volunteering is the opportunity to gain experience and skills.

What do volunteers do?

talk to people • work with animals • drive cars • plant trees
• write letters • paint walls • sell books • host events • raise funds • cook dinners • walk dogs • play music • organise meetings • listen to people • give first aid • collect for recycling • work with young people • spend time with older people • keep accounts • campaign on justice issues • office work • after school support for children and much more!

What is ALIVE?

ALIVE works with schools, charities, community organisations and within NUI Galway to provide volunteering opportunities in a wide variety of roles. We are dedicated to helping NUI Galway students volunteer in the area of their choice which suits their individual needs, interests and time commitments.

We are here to offer you information, advice, guidance and support throughout your volunteering experience. We also reward your efforts with the NUI Galway Presidential award for volunteering, the ALIVE Certificate.

to find out more about volunteering...
visit www.nuigalway.ie/alive
email alive@nuigalway.ie

“Volunteering puts all the college work, everything, in perspective, it is important to know there is more to life!” - Katie Stack, 4th Year, Occupational Therapy, Volunteer with Ability West

“As the layout and design editor for a Galway community magazine I get to be creative and I am putting my degree to work. It’s a really great opportunity, good experience for the CV and I have a reference.” - Gearóid Ó Treasaigh, 4th Year, Information Technology, Volunteer with Galway City Community Forum

Now is your time... and you get back so much in return!



STEP 1

Why volunteer?

There are a huge range of reasons to volunteer, including personal and career benefits. You may want to...

Benefit Personally:

- do something worthwhile
- make a difference
- help a cause close to your heart
- meet new people
- give back to society
- have fun!
- take an opportunity to get to know and participate in the local community
- have an enjoyable break from studying

Benefit Professionally:

- build your skills
- increase your employability
- gain valuable experience
- gain references for applications
- network
- apply for postgraduate course
- something to talk about in a job interview
- get the NUI Galway Presidential Award for Volunteering, the ALIVE Certificate
- the chance to reflect on your degree subject in the real world

Build Your Skills

Volunteering is a great way to build on your existing skills and/or develop new skills. To learn more about skills visit NUI Galway's Career Development Centre at www.nuigalway.ie/careers/ Here are some skills you can gain from volunteering:

Communication (Oral and Written)

Delivering presentations
Acting as a secretary of a club or society
Joining the Literature and Debating society and getting involved
Getting involved in the Student Connect Mentoring Programme
Volunteering with a youth group in the community
Writing Articles for student publications such as SIN

Leadership and Teamwork

Captaining a Team
Volunteering as a committee member of a club or society
Being a class representative

Planning and Organisation

Balancing full-time study with a part-time job or family commitments and volunteering
Successfully establishing a new club or society
Organising a charity event



We could go on, but each person has different reasons as to why they want to volunteer, and each person will gain different benefits from the experience.

Thinking about why you want to volunteer is a great place to start when deciding to volunteer.

STEP 2

Where can I volunteer?

Volunteering is giving your time free of charge to a community. The timing couldn't be more perfect, while studying at NUI Galway, you can volunteer for just one afternoon of your time, a couple of hours a week or a whole summer. You choose.

You can volunteer:

- within the NUI Galway Community
- within the local Galway City Community
- within your Hometown community
- Internationally

Volunteer within the NUI Galway Community:

Volunteering on campus with your fellow NUI Galway students is a great opportunity to get involved, meet new people, have fun and gain experiences.

Clubs	www.clubs.nuigalway.ie	kathy.hynes@nuigalway.ie
Societies	www.socs.nuigalway.ie	socsbox@socs.nuigalway.ie
Student Connect Mentor Programme	www.student-connect.nuigalway.ie	mentors@nuigalway.ie
Flirt Fm (Student Radio)	www.flirtfm.ie/volunteers	info@flirtfm.ie
Students Union: Fundraiser, Class Rep, Part-time officer, SIN newspaper	www.su.nuigalway.ie	studentsunion@nuigalway.ie
Access Schools Programme: homework club, sports, tours, school visits.	www.nuigalway.ie/access/involved.html	ashla.ward@nuigalway.ie
WILL U? Health Promotion Volunteers	http://willu.nuigalway.ie	cindy.dring@nuigalway.ie
Disability Support Volunteer: volunteer to assist a fellow student with a disability at NUI Galway	www.nuigalway.ie/disability	disability.service@nuigalway.ie

In Your Home Town:

There are a huge range of opportunities all over Ireland with organisations seeking volunteers. For a complete list of the country-wide opportunities log on to www.volunteer.ie

When? You can volunteer at the weekends, during the summer and other breaks.

Volunteer within the Galway Community:

There are over 100 opportunities to volunteer within the Galway community through organisations, charities and schools all over the city.

For example:

- Join a homework club in a school
- Fundraise for a charity
- Befriend a person with a disability
- Train to support children by answering a helpline
- Plant a forest or raise environmental awareness
- Teach basic computer skills
- Visit the elderly
- Involve your Club or Society in a community activity

For a complete list of Galway City opportunities log on to www.nuigalway.ie/alive



*The opportunities are endless.
There are volunteering opportunities to suit
everyone, everywhere at anytime!*

Category	Example Activities	Organisations
Children and Youth	Homework Clubs, Afterschool Activities, Drama, Music, Sport, Help-lines	Primary and Secondary Schools, Foroige, Youth Work Ireland, Childline
Older People	Visiting, Meals on Wheels, Teaching IT skills, DIY	Age Action Ireland, COPE Galway
People	Health promotion, Fundraising, Victims of Crime, Mental Health, Fundraising	Samaritans, Galway Rape Crisis Centre, Croí, UCHG, Irish Kidney Association
People with Special Needs	Befriending, Cooking classes, Dance, Exercise, Visiting	Enable Ireland, Ability West, Brothers of Charity, Rehab Care
Social Justice: Homelessness, Poverty, Refugees, Human Rights	Shop teller, Fundraising, Campaigning, Befriending, Workshop facilitator	Simon Community, Amnesty International, Galway One World Centre
Environment	Gardening, Campaigning, Animals, Heritage	GSPCA, Community Organic Gardens, Galway Civic Trust
Arts, Media, Culture	Events, Websites, Journalism, Usher, Tickets	SpunOut.ie, Galway City Community Forum, Galway Arts Festival

Volunteer Internationally:

You could volunteer overseas in a developing country or volunteer closer to home in a wide range of organisations across Europe. For a complete list international volunteer opportunities log on to www.volunteeringoptions.org and check out the ALIVE website for advice, hints and tips at www.nuigalway.ie/alive

When? There are opportunities ranging from 2 weeks to 2 months during the summer break. Planning and preparation can take several months – so if you are thinking of volunteering this summer, get started researching opportunities asap!

Pictured are NUI Galway student volunteers Siobhán Kennedy, Mark Gantly and Seán Ó hIainmáin who volunteered in Ethiopia as part of a group of nine final year engineering students. They volunteered on a house building project and also helped with a literacy programme in Ethiopia for two months. Siobhán Kennedy said, "Ethiopia remains one of the world's poorest countries. As a group of graduate engineers we hope we can make a contribution to the house building project and assist the local people".



When? You can get involved at any time of the year. Log on to www.nuigalway.ie/alive to sign up!

STEP 3

What does ALIVE do to help Student Volunteers?

ALIVE is NUI Galway's Student Volunteering Programme.

ALIVE works with schools, charities, community organisations and within NUI Galway to provide volunteering opportunities in a wide variety of roles. We are dedicated to helping NUI Galway students volunteer in the area of their choice which suits their individual needs, interests and time commitments. We also reward your efforts with the NUI Galway Presidential Award for Volunteering, the ALIVE Certificate.

Support for ALIVE volunteers:

We are here to support all volunteers.

- **Volunteer Stories**
View the ALIVE website for photos of fellow volunteers and stories
- **ALIVE Newsletter**
Sign up for the ALIVE e-Newsletter and get regular updates on volunteering opportunities, news, stories, events, and freebies!
- **ALIVE Workshops**
Attend an ALIVE workshop to learn more about different types of volunteering and to meet fellow volunteers
- **ALIVE Civic Engagement Fund**
Apply to the ALIVE Civic Engagement Fund for resources to bring your ideas for a community project into reality. If you have a project idea for your friends, society, club or class to engage in the community, we can help you as part of the ALIVE Civic Engagement Fund.
- **Community Map**
Lost? Have a look at Community Map on the ALIVE website to help you choose an opportunity near you and help you with directions.
- **ALIVE Resources**
ALIVE has specially designed resources for volunteers available: A Guide to Volunteering with Children and Young People and a Guide to Volunteering Internationally.
- **ALIVE Certificate for Volunteering**
ALIVE rewards student volunteers with the NUI Galway Presidential award for Volunteering, the ALIVE Certificate.

Helping you Find a Volunteer Opportunity

There are loads of ways to find out about volunteering:

- Volunteer Opportunities Database on the ALIVE Website
- NUI Galway Volunteer Week
- International Volunteer Fair
- ALIVE e-Newsletter
- Drop in and Visit the ALIVE Team

ALIVE is here to offer you information, advice, guidance and support throughout your volunteering experience. Find out about all this and more: www.nuigalway.ie/alive



STEP 4

Choosing a volunteer opportunity

Questions to ask Yourself

When choosing a volunteer opportunity, ask yourself some questions:

How much time do I have to give?

- How much time can you spare for volunteering?
- Remember your other commitments (family, hobbies, employment) and do not over commit yourself.

When can I volunteer?

- What period of time can you commit to volunteering? For example, one day? A month? Six months? One day a week, more or less? Some opportunities require you to stay for a minimum period of time, so check before you commit.
- What days of the week are you free?
- What times of the day are you free? Morning? Afternoon? Evening?
- Do you have your own transport? If not, is it easy for you to use public transport?

What kind of volunteering would I like to do?

- In what ways do you feel you can best contribute?
- What are your particular skills and interests? What do you really enjoy doing?
- Do you prefer working with people on a one-to-one basis or in a group?
- Do you prefer not to work directly with people?

Challenge Yourself

The beauty of being a volunteer is the variety – there are over 120 different volunteer opportunities currently on the ALIVE website. There is an endless list of volunteer opportunities, but here is an idea. As a volunteer you can be involved in:

Photography

Horticulture

Music

First Aid

Drama

You can have the opportunity to be a:

Youth Leader

Good Listener

Visitor

Mentor

Receptionist

Event Manager

Fundraiser

Each person also has unique skills, abilities, experiences and attitude which they can bring to their volunteer work. So don't worry if you are not sure about what you can bring to the volunteering – most volunteer opportunities come with training. Why not try something new or different. This is a great chance to take on a challenge.

Volunteering is really give and take. You give your time, skills, energy and enthusiasm as well as gaining new skills and learning from the opportunity.



Volunteering Opportunities in Galway

Homework Clubs and Youth Activities

Access Office
Ballinfoile Family Services
Ballinfoyle Youth Development Project
Ballinfoyle Family Services
Ballybane/Mervue Community Development Programme
Big Brother Big Sister
Bohermore Youth Development Project
Calabria Youth Club, Headford
CAPE
Circles
Clann Resource Centre, Oughterard
Clare Youth Service, Ennis
Cullairbaun Community House Project, Athenry
Athenry Adolescent Support Project
Football Association of Ireland
Gaf Youth Café
Galway Community College
Galway Refugee Support Group (GRSG)
Galway Traveller Movement
Le Chéile & Ragoon Youth Project
LGBT Youth Group
Mercy College
Ragoon Family Centre
School Completion Programme Westside
School Completion Programme Tuam
Scoil Bhride Primary School
Scouting Ireland, Galway Units
SPARK
Westside Community Development Project
Youth Work Ireland, Westside

Animals and Environment: Campaigning, Heritage

An Taisce
Ballybane Community Organic Garden
Galway Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (GSPCA)

Culture: arts, media etc.

SpunOut.ie
Galway City Community Forum

International: volunteering abroad etc.

African Internship, Placement & Exchange Programme
Comhlámh
GOAL
Gorta – The Freedom from Hunger Council
Habitat for Humanity
VSI - Voluntary Service International

Older People: befriending, awareness etc.

Age Action Ireland – Galway
COPE Galway: Sonas Day Centre and Community Catering
Society of St. Vincent de Paul: Mill Street Centre

People with Disabilities: befriending

Ability West
Barretstown Gang Camp
Brothers of Charity Services Galway
Down Syndrome Ireland
Enable Ireland
Irish Wheelchair Association
RehabCare
Riding for Disabled Ireland
Special Olympics Ireland Connaught
Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus Ireland

People: crisis support, help-lines, victim of crime, parent support

A Woman's Heart Galway
Alzheimer Society of Ireland
Caring for Carers West
Ed-Start
Galway Rape Crisis Centre
Home-Start
ISPCC/Childline
Samaritans

Health Related

CD's Helping Hands
Children in Hospital Ireland
Croí
Irish Kidney Association
Positive Mental Health Foundation

Social Justice: Homeless, asylum support etc.

Amnesty International
Dochas, Orphanage in Kenya and Harambee Charity Shop
Eglinton Accommodation Centre
Internet Café
Galway Simon Community

NUI Galway: Mentoring, Societies

Flirt FM
NUI Galway Student Connect Mentor Programme
NUI Galway Career Development Centre
NUI Galway Chaplaincy
NUI Galway Clubs
NUI Galway Societies
Students Union - Class Representatives
Will U?

Civic Organisations

Céifin Centre
Civil Defence
Galway Irish-Polish Association
Galway Volunteer Centre (GVC)
Galway Youth Information Centre
Garda Reserve
Skillshare

Here are just some of the organisations you can volunteer with. To find out about volunteering opportunities, please visit our website at www.nuigalway.ie/alive

STEP 5

Getting Started as an ALIVE Volunteer

Make Contact: Express Interest in Volunteering

You can sign up to volunteer at the Volunteering Fair or on the ALIVE website. All you have to do is log-on to the ALIVE website and view the list of volunteering opportunities. Once you have decided which opportunity you want to volunteer with, click "express an interest" and enter your contact details. By expressing an interest with an opportunity you are saying that you would like to visit and learn more about volunteering.

How many opportunities should I express interest in? You will probably not know if an opportunity is the right one for you until you have made contact, and so it may be a good idea to get in touch with two or three that look promising. You are just enquiring at this stage, so until you have made a commitment you are under no obligation.

Visit and Meet with the Organisation

Meet the Community Organisation and learn more about volunteering. The organisation will also want to get to know you. They may ask you to fill in a Volunteer Application form and ask you a few questions about why you want to volunteer. Lost? Have a look at Community Map on the ALIVE website to help you with directions.

You may be asked to complete a Garda Clearance Form, when volunteering with children, young people, people with special needs or vulnerable adults. This form is confidential and asks for your contact details and previous addresses. The form is sent on your behalf of the organisation to the Central Garda Vetting Unit in Tipperary. The Garda Clearance form will then be sent back to your organisation indicating whether or not you have a criminal record. Again this is completely confidential. The organisation will inform you of the outcome of the Garda Clearance. A criminal record is not necessarily a barrier to volunteering. It is important though to discuss any previous convictions with the organisation so they can advise you properly about your volunteering options. Not all organisations require a Garda Clearance form.

Induction or Training

Expect a period of either induction or training to help you get to grips with your role, meet fellow volunteers and get to know the organisation. Training opportunities are great additions to your CV.

Informal Induction: Learn as you go, meet fellow volunteers
Formal Training: Extensive and specific to the volunteer role

First Day as a Volunteer:

- Check the Community Map on the ALIVE website to ensure you are going in the right direction!
- Arrive early for your first day and dress appropriately for your role.

Once-off Volunteering Opportunities

Some volunteer opportunities are once-off and volunteers are asked to support an event for example for a day, an afternoon or few hours. There may be training but expect to row in with the team and get the job done! These are great short-term commitment experiences for volunteers to show initiative and enthusiasm.



*Getting started volunteering
could not be easier with ALIVE.
Organisations are waiting to
hear from you, go throw yourself
into the opportunities!*

Getting Started as a Volunteer: What to do if....

I know I want to volunteer in the community with a homework club, or youth group, or with older people, etc.	Come along to the Volunteering Fair to meet organisations with opportunities to volunteer.
I am new to Galway and don't really know my way around	Have a look at the Volunteer Map on the ALIVE website, it has all the organisations indicated to help you find your way!
I have decided on the opportunity that I want to volunteer with	Great! Sign up on the ALIVE website, www.nuigalway.ie/alive to volunteer, then you will receive an email from the community organisation.
I can't decide on where to volunteer	The ALIVE team can help you find the ideal volunteer opportunity. Email us for the weekly e-newsletter with information about volunteering opportunities.
I started volunteering with an organisation	Ensure you are registered with ALIVE - we need to know about you! Email us alive@nuigalway.ie
I didn't hear anything from the community organisation I signed up to volunteer with	If you do not get a response from an organisation within one week email ALIVE, we will follow-up for you and let you know what is happening.
The organisation is full of volunteers	When an organisation gets back to you that they are full, then email ALIVE, there is probably another similar organisation that is seeking volunteers.

STEP 6

Things to remember while volunteering...

Commitment and Reliability

One of the greatest things you can do for yourself and for your volunteering is to follow through on your commitment. Obviously people get sick, or have other commitments. The key is to ensure good communication with your community organisation. Think about teaming up with a friend and you can motivate each other. When volunteering with community organisations you are ambassadors of NUI Galway, don't let them down when you make a commitment. Most volunteering is for a few hours a week for the academic year – when you look back it will be a small commitment that will make a big difference in your life and the lives of others.

Support and Supervision

When volunteering with community organisations expect to be supervised and supported. If you find yourself in a position where you are alone or uncomfortable, know who to talk to in the organisation. Remember ALIVE is here to support you too – drop us a line anytime.

Have Fun!

Enjoy it! Most people start volunteering and wonder why they didn't start sooner. Tell us your experiences. We love hearing how ALIVE volunteers are doing, drop us a line. We are here to support you and feel free to email or visit us to discuss your volunteering. We feature volunteer stories on the website, in SIN, and we nominate students for local and national awards.



*Make the commitment and stick to it!
ALIVE is here to support and recognise
your dedication.*

While volunteering: What to do if....

I realise I don't have time to volunteer anymore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak to your Community organisation contact person – if you are going to withdraw from volunteering, please give them plenty of notice. • Speak to ALIVE if you'd like to do something less time-consuming.
I don't feel that I'm getting enough support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak to your Community organisation contact person • Speak to ALIVE.
I'd like a reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best person to write you a reference is your Community organisation • ALIVE can provide a reference if you apply for the ALIVE Certificate.
I am leaving my volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please, please tell ALIVE and the Community organisation – it's very useful for us to know if you are no longer volunteering, and the organisation needs to know too. • Don't just not turn up. You have built a relationship with the organisation, so you need to ensure that you tell them.

STEP 7

Apply for the NUI Galway Presidential Award for Volunteering, the ALIVE Certificate

Get Certified! The NUI Galway ALIVE Certificate for Volunteering is a Presidential Award recognising all extra-curricular activities of all NUI Galway students.

To congratulate and recognise students that volunteer, the President of NUI Galway, James J Browne awards the ALIVE Certificate to students that give their time to communities – whether that be the NUI Galway, Galway city, your hometown or international communities.

What's it all about?

The ALIVE Certificate has three aims.

First and foremost, we want to reward all the time and effort students put into societies, sports clubs, campaigns, committees, community volunteering, Mentoring, Class Rep, student radio, and everything else that isn't degree-related, all your extra-curricular activities.

Secondly, employers note that students have a lot of fantastic experience but do not know how to talk about it in interviews and application forms.

Third, the Certificate is an opportunity for you to reflect on your volunteering, academic degree and role in society. Volunteers can really make a difference in the world.

NUI Galway has developed the ALIVE Certificate for Volunteering: a chance to tell us what you have been doing and get the recognition you deserve!

Applying for the Certificate

You can apply online for the ALIVE Certificate at www.nuigalway.ie/alive. All you need to do is complete a few questions about your volunteering.

To qualify you need to be an active volunteer for at least one semester. You can volunteer in Galway, in your hometown, or internationally during the summer months. ALL volunteering is recognised.

ALIVE Certificate Ceremony

The ALIVE Certificate for Volunteering represents the volunteering, training and reflection you have undertaken. The Certificate is awarded annually in March at the ALIVE Certificate Ceremony by the President of NUI Galway. Everyone is welcome to the annual event – students, staff, community organisations – to celebrate volunteering. Each student is presented with their Certificate at the Ceremony.

Volunteering and Your CV

On your CV it is important to refer to the ALIVE Certificate as an achievement. It is a great addition to your CV. Check out the ALIVE website for details on how to add volunteering to your CV.



"The impact of student volunteering in the community is considerable and NUI Galway is proud to celebrate your achievements through the award of the ALIVE Certificate."
Dr. James J Browne, President, National University of Ireland Galway

Volunteering in Summary: Things you need to know about volunteering!

You can volunteer in the local Galway community, your hometown, internationally and/or with activities on the NUI Galway campus.

Volunteering is beneficial for you and the communities you belong to.

ALIVE is here to help you throughout your volunteering, email, call, visit, keep in touch!

Register online for the ALIVE weekly email newsletter – it's got new volunteering opportunities, one-off events and lots more.

ALIVE partners with schools, charities and community organisations to provide volunteering opportunities in a wide variety of roles.

Please tell ALIVE when you do start volunteering– it helps us, to help you, if we know.

Attend an ALIVE workshop to help you explore what you have learnt as a volunteer for your CV.

If you have a project idea for your friends, society, club or class to engage in the community, we can help you as part of the ALIVE Civic Engagement Fund.

Volunteers can achieve the NUI Galway Presidential Award for Volunteering, the ALIVE Certificate.

If you enjoy volunteering – spread the word!



Significant Dates

The following dates are of significance to volunteers. Why not organise an event to raise awareness on a world issue. You can apply to the ALIVE Civic Engagement Fund with your project ideas for funds to make it happen!

8 September	International Literacy Day
21 September	International Day of Peace
26 September	Declaration of the Rights of the Child
1 October	International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
5 October	World Teachers Day
6 October	International Day for Children
16 October	World Food Day
17 October	International Day for the Elimination of Poverty
24 October	United Nations Day
1 November	International Volunteer Managers Appreciation Day
16 November	International Day for Tolerance
20 November	Universal Children's Day
25 November	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
1 December	International Aids Day
3 December	International Day for Persons with a Disability
5 December	International Volunteer Day
5 December	Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development International
10 December	Human Rights Day

15 January	Martin Luther King Day
21 February	International Mother Language Day
8 March	International Day for Women's Rights
17 March	St. Patrick's Day
21 March	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
22 March	World Water Day
7 April	World Health Day
22 April	International Earth Day
3 May	World Press Freedom Day
15 May	International Day of Families
25 May	World Africa Day
4 June	International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
5 June	World Environment Day
17 June	World Day Combat Desertification and Drought
20 June	World Refugee Day
6 August	Hiroshima Day
9 August	International Day of the World's Indigenous People
12 August	International Youth Day



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• sell books • host events • raise funds • cook dinners • walk dogs • play music •
organise meetings • listen to people • give first aid • collect for recycling • work with
young people • spend time with older people • keep accounts • campaign on justice
issues • office work • after school support for children and much more!

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