

# Volunteers: Resources, Ideas, Networks

## Setting

### Key Argument & Literature Review

TS has certain strengths that enhance Social Innovation:

“One trait are volunteers, who bring openness and produce new ideas, [suggesting] volunteering has an impact on social innovation in motives, organisational forms or outcomes.”

#### Who volunteers?

Varied by demographic, economic, social & psychological traits

#### Why do people volunteer?

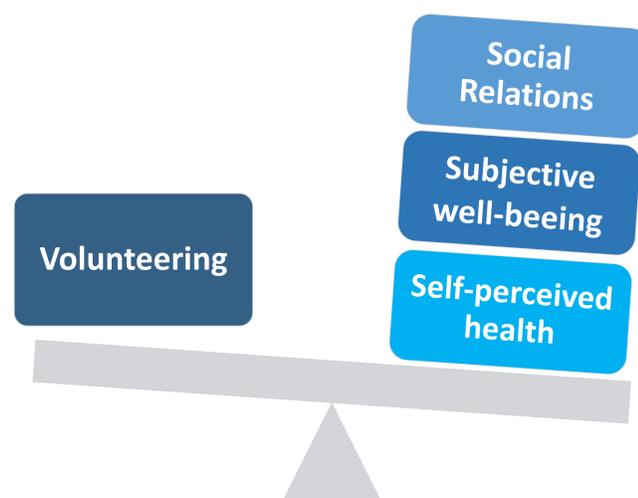
1. Awareness of need
2. Solicitation (being asked)
3. Altruism (concern for recipients)
4. Reputation (social rewards)
5. Psychological & material costs and benefits
6. Values (social and political attitudes)
7. Efficacy (perceived impact)

## Effects

### Volunteering and Welfare Impacts

What is the impact of third sector activities on the welfare of participants?

“Positive associations between changes in volunteering and changes in self-perceived health, subjective well-being and social relations.”



## Conditions

### Volunteer involvement in Social Innovation

- Much work in TS is performed by volunteers → various ways in which they are involved in SI.
- Not always easy to locate the emergence of SI. New ideas are often incidental rather than produced by deliberate policies.
- Volunteers come up with new ideas, but professionals initiate and channel innovations.
- Innovations initiated by volunteers are mostly located on the local level.

*So, what promotes voluntary engagement within TS organisations...?*

1. Recruiting through personal networks;
2. Mobilising through organisation's website and social media;

3. Helping volunteers to find their way in the organisation;
4. Organising team meetings with employees;
5. Creating room for their own activities and avoiding strict rules.

*... And what helps volunteers to contribute to social innovation?*

- Channeling innovations through a good practices management system;
- Finding dedicated project managers and providing trainings and certificates;
- Creating online communities where volunteers can exchange experiences and ideas;
- Giving volunteers ownership of activities;
- De-centralising the organisation and giving room for local initiatives.



ITSSOIN has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 613177.

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