

Our Vision Statement:

'Ability West is dedicated to enabling people with an intellectual disability realise their dreams and ambitions.'

The Volunteer Programme is an opportunity to try something new, broaden one's understanding of intellectual disability and a chance to share something you enjoy doing with others. The only requirement to join is commitment and reliability.

Volunteering experiences are flexible. You may volunteer as often as you like, when you like. We do, however, look for a commitment of a minimum of 6 months.

... This is your opportunity to make a difference!

Where are the Centres Located?

- Ballinasloe
- Ballyglunin
- Carraroe
- Clifden
- Dunmore
- Galway City
- Glenamaddy
- Kilkerrin
- Mountbellew
- Portumna
- Tuam

If you have any other queries or require further information on any aspect of voluntary work, please contact:

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**Lending a helping hand,
 Giving what you can...**
It makes all the difference!



- Are you interested in volunteering?
- Are you interested in working with people with intellectual disabilities?
- Would you like to get more involved in your community but are concerned about how much time you can give?

Why not get involved with Ability West?

The wide variety of locations and involvement opportunities makes it easy! Everything you need to know is explained in this leaflet. So read on and go ahead... find out more about Volunteering!

About Ability West

...what is it that we do?

Ability West is a voluntary organisation, which provides a range of high-quality community based services to children and adults with an intellectual disability. Our centres are based throughout Galway City and County.

Services are provided for children, teenagers and adults. The objective of our services is to develop the potential of each individual and to ensure their participation in their local community.

The purpose of the Volunteer Programme is to enhance social and leisure opportunities for our service users through a variety of activities. You can befriend a person with an intellectual disability or you can lend a hand in one of our centres. If you don't have the time to make a regular commitment to the Volunteer Programme, you can help in a local fundraising initiative in your spare time!

* Experience is not necessary and relevant training is provided.

Ways to Get Involved

BEFRIENDING	IN THE CENTRES	FUNDRAISING
Go for a coffee	Community skills programme	Undertake specific fundraising projects
Going for a walk	Art programme	Table quiz
Shopping	Music therapy	Dance
Cinema	Sports Activities	Maracyle
Go for a meal	Helping out at discos	Seven-a-Side
Bowling	Drive a minibus	Sponsored walk
Go to a pub to watch a match	Being an extra pair of hands	Any new ideas you may have!

How to become a Volunteer in six simple steps!

1. Screening: complete the volunteer application and a Garda Clearance form.

2. Interview/Informal Chat: just so we can get to know you and assess the most suitable placement for you.

3. Training: we provide specific training.

4. Matching: a successful match will result in an enjoyable placement for both volunteer and service user!

5. Introduction: between the volunteer and service user. If everyone is agreeable, the Volunteer Agreement form is then signed.

6. Support: there will be ongoing support available to review how the placement is going.

What will I gain from becoming a Volunteer?

- You will have an opportunity to meet new people.
- You will learn new skills or refresh old skills.
- You will experience the satisfaction of helping others and making a difference in your community.
- You will share your talents and skills with others.
- You will have fun!



Providing Services and Supports to People with an Intellectual Disability

People with an Intellectual Disability

No two people are alike. We all know people who are better at doing some things than we are and others who find it harder to do things that we may find easy.

People with an intellectual disability have the same needs, the same feelings and the same rights as any other person.

They do however, tend to learn more slowly or differently than most people and they find it more difficult to do certain tasks. For instance, they may find it more difficult to make themselves understood, to learn to read or write, to use money or to cook a meal.

Most people with intellectual disabilities are able to learn those and most other skills if they are given sufficient training and support.

RULES OF THUMB... when meeting a person with an intellectual disability

- Be yourself.
- Share your thoughts.
- Get the service user to clarify what they mean if you don't understand.
- Use simple language.
- Don't be surprised by spontaneity.
- Be accepting of differences.