TOP TIPS FROM IIV ACHIEVERS

For your IIV assessment
## Preparation

| **INVEST TIME** | Make sure that you have enough time to dedicate to liV. It is not a quick and easy process but it is worth spending the time to work through it properly. Rather than an expense, consider it an investment. |
| **ENGAGE ALL STAKEHOLDERS FROM THE START** | Communication from the very beginning is crucial. Let everyone know what is happening and why. Make sure everyone, including senior management, is aware of the benefits of achieving liV and why it is important to your organisation.  
- Ensure volunteers are aware that they are not being tested but the organisation is.  
- Keep staff fully informed about the process and make sure they are aware of their roles in it. |
| **SET UP A WORKING GROUP** | Set up a small working group that includes staff, volunteers and trustees representing all levels in the organisation. Ensure that the group has clear objectives and timescales and treats liV as an ongoing project.  
- Where appropriate a steering group can help share the workload or at the very least provide feedback on any policies or processes the liV lead has developed. |
| **CREATE AN ACTION PLAN** | Plan, plan, plan! If possible build the award into work plans before you apply - that way you will already be going along the right lines.  
- Don't rush, try to do the work in manageable size chunks. Make an action plan with key deadlines and block time out in your diary weekly to allow enough time to complete these tasks. When setting deadlines, find out the liV Quality Assurance Panel dates in advance and work backwards. |
| **KNOW THE liV INDICATORS BACK TO FRONT** | Read and understand all of the liV criteria indicators and keep reading them throughout the process.  
- Some organisations used the liV indicators at a team meeting getting their staff to self-evaluate where they thought the organisation was against the standard. This introduced liV to those who didn't know much about it and got everyone focused on what they wanted to achieve. |
Key advice from IiV Achievers

- Make sure the volunteer agreement is not written like an employee contract
- Use the 9 indicators as a checklist to gather evidence
- Know your volunteers and ensure that supervisions are being carried out regularly
- Keep a single printed master copy of the policy and procedures for review
- Start with your volunteers and what they want - Put them at the heart of the process.
- Provide up to date evidence of policies, procedures and practices
- Find out what a bad experience of volunteering is and learn from it
- Ensure you have enough people to support the self-assessment process in order to check and double check documentation
## Self-assessment & Development Plan

| **SET UP A REALISTIC TIME FRAME** | Start as early as you can because as you complete the self-assessment you will realise that there are policies that you need to update and systems you need to put in place.  
It can be hard finding time alongside your day job so be realistic with timescales and allow plenty of time to review and amend paperwork. Leave plenty of time to ensure that your supporting processes have been well thought-out, if possible seek feedback from relevant staff and volunteers.  
That said don’t be put off by the amount of paperwork - you probably have more evidence prepared than you think! |
| **BE OPEN TO ADDRESS PROBLEM AREAS** | Be prepared to make changes, even if they are significant. LiV is the perfect opportunity to make changes you want to see in your volunteer programme and your organisation.  
Embrace it as a positive experience which provides an opportunity to evaluate the management of volunteers in your organisation, something that needs to be done and refreshed anyway.  
It is essential for you to be honest, to challenge yourself and recognise that this is a way for the organisation to improve. By seeing LiV as a framework for improvement rather than the pursuit of an award you’re opening yourselves up to adopting some real change that will really make a difference for the better for your volunteers. |
| **USE ALL AVAILABLE SUPPORT AND RESOURCES** | Ask for and find help - there is a lot of guidance and support available! Listen to the advice from your assessor and follow their guidance. They are the experts and have a wealth of knowledge and experience.  
There’s a lot of examples of good practice out there:  
- [Investing in Volunteers Library](#)  
- [Knowhow non-profit website](#)  
- [NCVO resources](#)  
- [Investing in Volunteers Training & Support page](#) |
Getting the most out of your accreditation

- Thank all staff and volunteers that took part in the process
- Send us your case study
- Tell your current funders
- Take a picture of your team with the plaque and tweet #iivuk
- Hold an awards event, if possible we’re happy to attend and present you with the plaque
- Mention having the quality standard in funding applications
- Use the IV logo on your website, letter head and any other resources
- Put it in your internal newsletter
- Inform local press by sending them a press release
- Stay in touch with us, we want to hear from you and we are happy to promote your achievement