

Irish Girl Guides press release

7 March 2018

Irish Girl Guides appeals to Irish women on International Women's Day

- 3,000 girls are on waiting lists to join Irish Girl Guides -

With 3,000 girls waiting to join the organisation, Irish Girl Guides is hoping that women throughout Ireland will step forward this International Women's Day (8 March) to volunteer.

Irish Girl Guides (IGG) equips and empowers girls and young women from 5-30 years to grow in confidence, independence and resilience and to develop essential life-skills. Volunteers find that they benefit in the same way as the girls and that they enjoy the safe, non-competitive, fun atmosphere of Guiding. Many volunteers make friends for life with people they wouldn't otherwise meet.

The Girl Guide programme is girl-led and incorporates a wide variety of activities which volunteers learn as they go – team games, recycled crafts, campfire songs, indoor and outdoor challenges. Girls are encouraged to get involved in every activity to the best of their ability in an unpressurised environment.

Volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and have different skills to offer, as can be seen in IGG's #becomeavolunteer campaign video, which features a Garda, a farmer, a mum, a solicitor, a teacher, a scientist and a quantity surveyor. IGG currently has 1,800 volunteers and always has room for more.

"Our message is that 3,000 girls are waiting because we need more women to volunteer," says IGG Chief Commissioner Helen Concannon. "There are lots of ways to volunteer with us, from working directly with the girls as a Leader or Unit Helper, to support roles behind the scenes. No previous Guiding experience is necessary and we provide appropriate child protection training and resources. You will become part of a team of like-minded caring women who want to empower the next generation of girls and young women.

"Studies show that volunteering is good for mental health as you get a great deal of satisfaction from giving something to the community, developing new skills and building on existing experience and knowledge. The more we give, the happier we feel. Volunteering also increases self-confidence and is good for your CV as it demonstrates your commitment to the community and a willingness to work for the betterment of others.

"We have chosen International Women's Day to launch our campaign as it is a day to celebrate women's achievements and it's a day for inspiration and change. Our volunteers are helping bring about change in the lives of girls and young women and we need more volunteers in order to reach greater numbers of girls. We encourage girls to pursue their dreams and to believe that they can achieve whatever they want to.

"We would like to welcome every single girl who wishes to join our organisation and, for this to happen, we need more women to step forward and volunteer. Even just giving one hour a week can make all the difference to a group of girls wanting to grow and develop their skills in an informal setting."

To find out more, see www.irishgirlguides.ie, email info@irishgirlguides.ie or tel: 01 6683898. We'd love to hear from you!

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Notes for editors:

Irish Girl Guides has approximately 12,000 members. Guiding started in Ireland in 1911 and operates throughout the 26 counties with 1,800 volunteer leaders providing an informal educational programme of fun and challenging activities that foster confidence and leadership skills in girls and young women, enabling them to develop to their full potential and to become responsible citizens. Girls from age 5+ can choose to earn a wide range of badges, including Community Action, Cultural Diversity, Disability Awareness, Drug Awareness, Online Surfer, Science Investigator and Global Traveller.