
Report
“Revealing European Values In Volunteering in Europe” #REVIVE Seminar
Finland

Date and Venue:

5.12.2023
Kalliolan Setlementitalo, Sturenkatu 11, Helsinki

Citizen Forum Finland’s 30th anniversary
Civic Engagement – a Superpower

Arranged by: Kansalaisareena – Citizen Forum Finland

DRAFT Agenda

Date:
Venue:

10:00 - 10:10	Introduction and welcome
10:10 - 10:30	
10:30 - 11:00	
11:00 - 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 - 12:00	

The aim of the speeches and activities at the event were to provide information and inspiration about volunteerism and its future possibilities. The main messages of the event revolved around the overarching themes of our celebratory year: volunteering creates well-being and connects beyond borders; there is strength in unity, and diversity is an asset.

At 13:00–14:45:

- Hosts: young volunteers Mesi Tanninen, 15, and Elo Tykkälä, 17

Our young hosts shared their own experiences and views about why volunteering is important to them, and skillfully guided the audience through the celebration with enthusiasm and a relaxed atmosphere. Mesi and Elo have made youth volunteering visible with their own example, and their story is captured in this promotional video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQjg9CRP5m8>

- Opening: Anne Porthén, the Executive Director of Kansalaisareena, and Tarja Jalli, the Chairperson of the Board

They presented a rap about civic engagement that they had created with the help of ChatGPT.

- Recognition of the Volunteer of the Year 2023

The jury of Kansalaisareena awarded two Volunteers of the Year this year: Maribel Paevere and Pyry Young from Helsinki. The jury justified their unanimous decision based on the diversity of the chosen volunteers and the impact and relevance of their activities. The Volunteer of the Year was awarded for the tenth time. Overall, 63 persons from all around Finland were nominated as candidates in the competition.

Maribel Paevere, chosen as the second Volunteer of the Year 2023, despite her young age (17), has been actively involved as a volunteer with IYC Finland for several years. She works for the well-being of both people and the environment.

The second awardee, Pyry Young, has given a voice and visibility to an issue that many men have faced in solitude. He has initiated a conversation about male infertility, facilitated peer support for men experiencing infertility, and increased knowledge and understanding of the grief that many aspiring fathers go through.

- Keynote Speech: Civic Engagement – a superpower: Speech by Professor Anne Birgitta Pessi, Ph.D. in Church Sociology

The keynote speaker, Anne Birgitta Pessi, is a pioneering researcher in the field of volunteerism. She explained the significance of civic and volunteer activities to the recipients, the volunteers,

interpersonal connection, and society. Drawing on research, she talked about the concepts of empathy, compassion, copassion and self-compassion. She summarised that volunteerism and empathy are at the core of the sustainability of the entire society.

- New trends in volunteering in Kalliolan Settlementti: Speech by Volunteer Coordinator Olavi Karvonen

Olavi Karvonen shared how, in the volunteer activities he leads, structures have been reformed to address future challenges. These include the rise of free civic engagement in the 4th sector, diversity, and better consideration of various strengths in volunteer work.

- Community-building and participatory activities

At 14:45–16:15:

- Coffee service
- Vision wall for the future of volunteering
- Story wall of Kansalaisareena

At 16:15–17:00:

- Circus workshop led by Circus Magenta: a creative workshop focusing on themes of collaborative creation and discovering new strengths.

17:00 Closing

In addition to the young hosts, a diverse group of volunteers supported the event in various roles: they created decorations, assisted in venue arrangements, and photographed the event. Even children, starting from the age of four, participated by making decorative paintings to the event.

Call to action:

We gave this call to action to everyone who were invited into the event:

- Recognizing the good around you increases trust in others. Let's make acts of kindness visible!
- Share with others a good deed that inspires you. Did you receive help yourself or witness an act that impressed you?
- If you are already involved in volunteering, share your volunteer work with others!

- If you haven't tried volunteering yet, find a task that interests you at Vapaaehtoistyö.fi!
- On social media, you can post your gift to Kansalaisareena with the tags [#Kansalaisareena30](https://twitter.com/Kansalaisareena30) and [#VapaaehtoistenPäivä](https://twitter.com/VapaaehtoistenPäivä).

Quotes from the story wall of Kansalaisareena and the vision wall for the future of volunteering:

- “Art for everyone! Volunteers can create new communities with the means of art”
- “I participated the Youth Volunteer Festival organized by Citizen Forum! I decorated the festival hall and held a speech about youth volunteering. The day was awesome!”
- “The volunteering of the future will be open for everyone! When we make things together we are already very close to achieving this mission.”
- “Volunteering on a youth camp was wonderful: the participants dare to be what they are, and share their own views. It is very rewarding to create an open and trustful atmosphere in the camp, and it brings joy for everyone!”