
Maia EV Capital Candidate 2026 - Jury Feedback

Maia, a municipality in Portugal, demonstrates exemplary dedication to supporting and developing volunteering, continually enhancing its quality and impact. The city's inclusive and far-reaching volunteer initiatives, spanning local to international levels, align well with the Blueprint for Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030), further strengthening its candidacy for the European Volunteer Capital.

The accompanying video highlights Maia's genuine and tangible commitment to volunteering across all areas of solidarity, conveying both emotion and empathy. It is a clear legacy to the municipality's dedication to fostering civic participation.

Maia's strategic approach to volunteering is centred on building an inclusive society, with volunteering positioned as a core value. A key initiative is the establishment of the Municipal Volunteer Centre, which offers training for volunteers and organisations, significantly boosting the city's volunteer infrastructure. To enhance support for volunteering, it is recommended that future projects consider including volunteer time as part of co-financing strategies.

The municipality actively organises volunteering fairs, facilitating collaboration between the public and private sectors on various volunteer projects. These efforts are celebrated annually at the "**Gala do Voluntariado**," a public event that honours and recognizes volunteer contributions.

Looking ahead, Maia plans to introduce a "**Volunteer Week**" to further promote the importance of volunteering.

Maia's digital efforts are impressive, successfully leveraging a wide range of social media platforms and local media channels to raise awareness about volunteering and engage informal volunteer groups. The Municipal Volunteer Centre also utilises volunteer management software, enabling efficient volunteer matching and ensuring smooth volunteer engagement.

Maia fosters intergenerational volunteering by promoting projects for children, youth, adults, and seniors, as well as encouraging family volunteering to unite different generations.

An active supporter of the European Solidarity Corps, Maia partners with this initiative to promote international volunteering opportunities, particularly among young people. Additionally, Maia has implemented regulations to ensure that volunteers do not replace paid workers, upholding the ethical principles of volunteering.