



MEMBERSHIP OF VICTIM SUPPORT EUROPE INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

Victim Support Europe is an independent organisation that highlight and address the challenges facing victims in the aftermath of crime. One of Victim Support Europe's many strengths lies in its unique position as the recognised umbrella organisation of major victim support services in Europe. The diversity of the membership is a key component, which gives Victim Support Europe an important influencing position in respect of the rights and needs of victims and witnesses of crime in Europe. The wide backgrounds and experiences of our member organisations also help to ensure that they can learn from each other to develop high quality services in the aftermath of crime.

We provide the foundation for a brighter future for victims in Europe. Join us!

This paper is intended to assist victim support organisations and other entities in applying for membership of Victim Support Europe.

2. FULL MEMBERSHIP

Full membership is open to European non governmental Victim Support organisations providing or overseeing a range of generic services of practical, psychological and emotional support to victims of crime on a national level. Such services must be available to all victims of crime. Consideration for full membership will be given to organisations operating at a sub state level that

provide support services on a large scale to a significant group of people within the population or provide a substantial range of services.

Full membership is only open to non governmental Victim Support Organisations that operate in a European state as defined by the Council of Europe. Victim Support Organisations interested in full membership are invited to contact VSE's Administrative Officer for more information and support.

CRITERIA FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP

Conditions of full membership include that the application organisation is:

- (a) An independent non governmental organisation
- (b) Provides a range of general services supporting victims of crime, including the provision of practical and emotional support
- (c) Operates at a state or national level and provides or makes available support to a substantial group of the population
- (d) Provides services free of charge to the end service user
- (e) Ensures within the laws of their state that the confidentiality of the service user is respected and maintained in all its activities
- (f) Provides adequate training to all staff and volunteers working with or supporting victims of crime
- (g) Generally agree with and support the principles, policy, standards and good practice guidelines that may from time to time be agreed by Victim Support Europe.
- (h) Participate actively in the work of Victim Support Europe

- (i) Provide on a regular basis to VSE such reasonable information that may be requested to ensure that the conditions of membership continue to be met.
- (j) The full membership will be vested in the name of the member organization which should nominate two individuals to represent the organization at formal meetings of VSE, one of whom should be designated as the voting member.
- (k) Organisations in full membership must have a non discrimination policy at least in respect of age, sex, gender, nationality, religion and victims of crime.
- (l) Organisations in full membership when representing or working with VSE must not engage in party political activity or express views on behalf of a political party. Also they must not undertake campaigns concerning the sentencing of offenders with the exception being in relation to rights of victims.
- (m) Full membership is continuous on the basis of the payment of the appropriate membership fee, the provision from time to time of any reasonable information to ensure that the full membership criteria continue to be met.

3. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP

In considering an application for full membership VSE will wish to be satisfied that the applicant organisation can meet the criteria set out for full membership. In those European states with one or more member organisations, the applicant organisation will require to have the application signed and endorsed by the Chair, President, or other senior official of the existing organisations prior to submission. An application form can be obtained from the Administrative Officer, or from the VSE website at <http://victimsupporteurope.eu/member-organisations/id-like-to-be-a-member/application-form/> .

In European states where there are presently no full members of VSE, organisations should contact the Administrative Officer to express an interest in becoming a full member. The Administrative Officer will be able to give information and advice to assist the applicant organisation.

Usually the Executive Committee of VSE will appoint a member of the Committee to act as liaison between VSE and the applicant organisation. The application process can take between six to eight months. It will usually include some informal discussions with representatives of the applicant organisation followed by the submission of the application to VSE. A visit to the applicant member's organisation along with a presentation on its work may be appropriate. Such a visit is usually considered when an application for full membership is received from an organisation in a state that does not presently have a VSE full member organisation.

The application accompanied if necessary by a short report and recommendation is then submitted for consideration by the Executive Committee which meets three times each year.

Successful applicant organisations will become members on receipt of the payment of the appropriate membership fee.

BENEFITS OF FULL MEMBERSHIP:

1. Members play a strategically important role in developing and innovating new policy and practice at a pan European level.
2. VSE has formal accredited consultation status with the European Union and the United Nations.
3. Access to some of the most renowned and recognised victim service experts in the EU and the world.
4. Opportunities to participate in European projects to develop policy and best practice in victim practice.

5. Regular opportunities to attend conferences, seminars and specialised training events.
6. Participation in VSE's annual conference and general meeting with the right for up to four observers to take part in the conference.
7. Membership of a diverse network of national organisations providing services to victims of crime across Europe.
8. Access to the members area of the VSE web site.
9. Quarterly VSE Newsletters that provide comprehensive updates on developments of member organizations throughout Europe. Also provides important information about the work of VSE at a European and international level.
10. The licensed use of the VSE logo on letterheads and publications.
11. European wide recognition of prestige and standards in the work of your national organisation.
12. An identified support person usually a member of the Executive Committee
13. Support when required for your organizations work at home and abroad.
14. Access to reports and briefings specially prepared for members.
15. In addition members may vote at Annual General Meetings including policy resolutions and elections to VSE's Executive Committee. Members may also be elected to the Executive Committee and other forums of VSE
16. A certificate of full membership of VSE is provided.

4. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

VSE recognises the important and valuable work undertaken by governmental bodies, academic institutions and other governmental and non governmental organisations operating within Europe at an international, national, regional or local level. Throughout Europe there are many victim support organisations that may not meet the criteria for full membership of VSE. Such organisations may have a legitimate interest in contributing to and benefiting from the work of VSE. To enable more effective networking, sharing of experience, information and best practice VSE has an associate membership scheme.

Bodies such as those outlined above are now able to make application for associate membership of VSE. An application form can be obtained from the Administrative Officer, or from the VSE website at <http://victimsupporteurope.eu/member-organisations/id-like-to-be-a-member/application-form/>

CRITERIA FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

The criteria for membership includes that the applicant organisation should:

- (a) Support broadly the aims and objectives of VSE.
- (b) Be in a relevant field of work associated with victims of crime.
- (c) Be interested in improving the position of victims of crime.
- (d) Applicants within Europe should have their application endorsed and countersigned by at least one full Victim Support Europe member organisation from the state in which the applicant's organisation is constituted or legally defined.
- (e) In European states where no full membership organisation exists, the application should be accompanied by at least one letter of support from a recognised public body or non governmental organisation or other such entity as may from time to time be defined by VSE.

- (f) Only formally constituted organisations can become associate members. Such organisations may be non governmental, governmental, academic, educational or victim support organisations operating nationally, regionally or locally.
- (g) Only organisations registered and operating in a European country as defined by the Council of Europe can be admitted to associate membership.
- (h) Associate members may attend and speak at annual general meeting of VSE but have no voting rights.
- (i) Associate membership is continuous on the basis of the payment of the appropriate membership fee, the provision from time to time of any reasonable information to ensure that associate membership criteria continues to be met. Finally that the associate members continues to support broadly the aims and objectives of VSE.

5. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

In European states where there are presently no full members of VSE, organisations should contact the Administrative Officer to express an interest in becoming an associate member. The Administrative Officer will be able to give information and advice to assist the applicant organisation.

Usually the Executive Committee of VSE will appoint a member of the Committee to act as liaison between VSE and the applicant organisation. The application process will usually include some informal discussions with representatives of the applicant organisation followed by the submission of the application to VSE. A visit to the applicant member's organization may appropriate. Such a visit is usually considered when an application for associate membership is received from an organisation in a state that does not presently have a VSE full member organisation.

The application accompanied if necessary by a short report and recommendation is then submitted for consideration by the Executive Committee which meets three times each year.

Successful applicant organisations will become associate members on receipt of the payment of the appropriate membership fee.

BENEFITS OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP:

1. Associate members can play a strategically important role in developing and innovating new policy and practice at a pan European and international level.
2. VSE has formal accredited consultation status with the European Union and the United Nations.
3. Access to some of the most renowned and recognised victim service experts in the EU and the world.
4. Opportunities to participate in European projects to develop policy and best practice in victim practice.
5. Regular opportunities to attend conferences, seminars and specialised training events.
6. Membership of a diverse network of national organisations providing services to victims of crime across Europe.
7. Access to the members area of the VSE web site.
8. The licensed use of the VSE associate membership logo on letterheads and publications.
9. Enhanced European recognition of prestige and standards in the work of associate members organisation.
10. Access to reports and briefings specially prepared for members.

11. Quarterly VSE Newsletters that provide comprehensive updates on developments of member organisations throughout Europe. Also provides important information about the work of VSE at a European and international level.
12. A certificate of associate membership of VSE is provided.

6. MEMBERSHIP FEES

The membership fees for both full and associate membership will be as determined by the General Assembly on the basis of a proposal from the Executive Board. Presently at July 2014 they are:

FULL MEMBERSHIP	500 Euros minimum/3000 maximum
ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP	200 Euros fixed