
Rzeszów EV Capital Candidate 2026 - Jury Feedback

Rzeszów's candidacy for the title of European Volunteer Capital 2026 reflects a significant effort to support and promote volunteering within one of Poland's largest cities. However, there are several key areas where the application could have been strengthened to better meet the expectations associated with this recognition.

While volunteer organisations in Rzeszów engage with the municipality through the Volunteer Academy, the extent and nature of this engagement is not sufficiently detailed. Providing more specific information on the frequency and format of interactions between volunteer-involving organisations and municipal authorities would have been beneficial.

Rzeszów's application does not fully address relevant funding provisions for volunteering activities. It remains unclear whether volunteer time can be used as a resource for co-financing or grants. Detailed information on these funding mechanisms and how they support volunteer infrastructure organisations, would significantly strengthen the city's candidacy.

Apart from the initiatives such as the sharing of spaces to address the war crisis and the Urban Lab, there is little evidence of specific support aimed at enhancing the capacity or quality standards of both informal and formal volunteer networks in Rzeszów.

Additionally, the application lacks evidence of a strategy for incorporating digital technology into the city's volunteer initiatives, such as online volunteer matching systems, digital platforms for volunteer management, or the use of social media and other technologies to engage and mobilise volunteers. Developing and implementing a digital strategy would not only modernise the city's approach, but also make volunteering more accessible and efficient.

While Rzeszów's candidacy demonstrates a general appreciation for volunteering, the city could benefit from a more comprehensive approach that emphasises innovation and the integration of new methods for engaging volunteers. For instance, the application could have highlighted initiatives aimed at recruiting new volunteers, particularly from underrepresented groups, or innovative methods for increasing volunteer engagement and retention.

Although Rzeszów has accommodated a large number of refugees from Ukraine, the application does not describe the learnings or sustainable outcomes from this experience, nor does it clearly explain how volunteers were involved.

The city does offer necessary training and mentorship programs to support the growth of volunteers, and the jury acknowledges the importance of the **"Let's Act" program**, which offers project management and grant writing support to organisations. However, the application could



Strengthening, Inspiring and Celebrating
VOLUNTEERING & SOLIDARITY since 1992!



Co-funded by
the European Union

be further enhanced by outlining more detailed plans for training volunteer managers and mentors.

The strategy document provided by Rzeszów lacks the depth and specificity needed to convey a strong vision for the future. The actions mentioned are often described in broad terms without clear examples of measurable outcomes. The city would benefit from developing a more detailed and systematic strategy that includes specific objectives, strategies, and evaluation methods.

In conclusion, Rzeszów has made commendable efforts in its bid for the European Volunteer Capital 2026. However, to be more competitive, the city needs to provide more detailed, concrete, and strategic information regarding its volunteer programs, funding mechanisms, management strategies, and evaluation processes.

