



Volunteer recruitment

Get Out
Get Active

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Attracting and recruiting the right volunteers is one of the most important aspects to building an inclusive volunteering programme.

Getting the role description right

A role description should be reviewed at least every two years, or when the nature of a volunteer role or the needs of the volunteer/organisation changes substantially. Be flexible, adaptable and keep it simple to avoid putting prospective volunteers off.

Resources

See our Inclusive Communications guidance for more information



3. Volunteer recruitment



Top tips!

Put a process in place that suits your organisation

This should include a timeline of when and how to communicate with potential volunteers.

Try to respond to volunteers quickly

Volunteers may have other options available to them and they are very valuable to your organisation so you don't want to risk disengaging them. It also creates a good impression of the organisation they have expressed an interest in supporting.

Make first impressions count

Be friendly and welcoming - being passionate and enthusiastic about the opportunities on offer sets the right tone for an ongoing relationship. Always thank people for their interest and be sure to provide all the information a volunteer needs to make an informed choice whether to pursue a role further.

Consider each and every applicant carefully

While it can be tempting to pursue every volunteer applicant, make sure they are the right fit for your organisation.

Have a dedicated contact for enquiries

Create a dedicated email address for volunteer enquiries to allow you to manage them efficiently and set up an automatic response to let volunteers know you've received their email, what the next step is and when they can expect to hear back.

Make a call

Consider phoning them, but at a mutually agreed time. Some applicants may not feel comfortable receiving unscheduled calls. A call can be a really personal way of discussing the opportunity and will allow them to ask questions, while enabling you to champion the organisation. However, if a phone call is not viable, determine what the most suitable communication method would be.

Follow up activity

Set out an agreed timeline for follow up communication. Give people the benefit of the doubt and don't be afraid to send a follow up email to someone who you think has real potential.

Collecting and storing data

Know what information you need to collect from applicants and volunteers and how this will be stored and shared. Do you have consent to share information? Ensure GDPR regulations are followed. **Ensure you**

adhere to Data Protection Act 2018 ▶



3. Volunteer recruitment

Role descriptions

The volunteer opportunity advert

Key things to consider



Make sure the advert is accessible

so people with diverse communication needs are not excluded. Be inclusive to engage a wide audience and think about featuring images of disabled people being active in sports or proving your communications in various methods. Give the advert a clear title that describes the role e.g. avoid 'volunteer helper' and be more specific about what the opportunity involves as this attracts people with a relevant interest and skills.

Volunteer advert example ▶

Volunteer role description template ▶



Take the opportunity to **tell people about what the project is trying to achieve** and how they can make a difference while benefiting from being a part of it.



Highlight the ways that volunteers are rewarded

- from giving something back to the community to making new friends. Remember that volunteers should never incur expenses for supporting your organisation.



Use relatable images in the advert of existing volunteers who can act as advocates/champions.



Address potential concerns. Consider the role from the volunteer's perspective and what might deter and reassure them. They may be concerned about not having any relevant experience, so where applicable consider saying 'no previous experience required and training and support is provided'.



Avoid jargon. Try not to use complicated language or acronyms and use plain and simple words. Get someone to check the language you've used is clear and understandable.



Include contact details, how to apply and who the volunteer needs to contact to find out more about the role. Ensure to provide a variety of contact methods.

Resources

Inclusive Communications guidance and video - Activity Alliance ▶

Volunteer Scotland resources for organisations ▶

Top tips for recruiting disabled volunteers ▶

Attracting your ideal volunteers ▶



3. Volunteer recruitment

Recruitment methods and channels

Key things to consider

-  **Audience.** Consider who the project is looking to attract and what appeals to them. Pick the best recruitment method that will appeal to their values and communication channels.
-  **Engage the audience.** Consider who would want to do the role and where they obtain information.
-  **Use learning.** Revisit what worked and what didn't from previous volunteer recruitment experience, if applicable.
-  **Encourage volunteer advocates.** Invest time in current volunteers and make sure they feel happy and supported in their roles, which will hopefully encourage them to recommend the programme to their networks. A volunteer role could even be created to support this.

Recruitment methods and channels to consider:

-  Social media
-  Volunteer centres
-  Universities/colleges
-  Community events
-  Job centres
-  Word of mouth

Don't worry if you don't have much of a budget for advertising - there are many places where you can publicise for free:

Do IT ▶

Gumtree ▶

CharityJob ▶

Indeed ▶

Jobsite ▶

Vinspired ▶ (for young people aged 16-25)

Reach Volunteering ▶

Volunteer Now ▶

(for opportunities in Northern Ireland)

Google also offers grants to advertise for free using **Google adwords** ▶

The Sport and Recreation Alliance's free **Volunteer Finder** ▶ is a one-stop shop for recruiting sport volunteers. Clubs can create a profile and have instant access to the thousands of volunteers searching for their next opportunity.



#GetOutGetActive

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Photo credits: British Blind Sport (BBS) (1), GOGA Blackpool (2).