

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Recruitment

When recruiting you need to consider your target audience. People have different reasons for volunteering, such as wanting to give back, learning new skills or socialising.

It is also worth considering any barriers which might make it difficult for potential volunteers to find your opportunity. For example, do you need to provide information about your volunteering role in different formats or do you need to advertise in multiple places?

Plan what resources you'll need for your volunteers. Consider how much time and money you can allocate to supervision and training.

Plan how you'll support your volunteer's wellbeing.

Make your role exciting. In your description, include the change volunteers will bring about and the impact they will have in the community or organisation.

Induction

All volunteers should be fully inducted into their role- topics to cover include:

- History of your organisation
- What is its vision and mission?
- What other services/projects do you provide?
- Who is in the team?
- Talk through all policies that are relevant and important to the specific volunteer role.

Support

- Have regular supervision or catch-up sessions with your volunteers to discuss how they feel about their tasks and workload.
- Make sure you provide ongoing support to your volunteers and that you have identified who they need to contact, should they need to discuss anything.
- Provide relevant training so that your volunteers can perform their tasks to the best of their ability and develop their skills.
- Make sure to let your volunteers know how they will be supported in their role.

Provide volunteers with purpose.

- The most common reason that people volunteer is to find a sense of purpose. Volunteers should be reminded that their contribution matters and is making a significant difference to the community or organisation.

Reward and recognise volunteer regularly.

- Volunteers should be recognised and rewarded for their time and commitment. Communicate your appreciation, create personal development opportunities, and regularly thank your volunteers.

Skills Audit.

- The first step to bridge the skills gap in your volunteer team is to identify what skills are missing or lacking. You can do this by conducting a skills audit, which is a process of measuring and comparing the current and desired skills of your volunteers. You can use various methods to conduct a skills audit, such as surveys, interviews, observations, or self-assessments. The goal is to find out what skills your volunteers have, what skills they need, and what skills they want to learn or improve.

Providing training and development opportunities

- Once you have identified the skills gap in your volunteer team, you can provide them with training and development opportunities to fill it. You can choose from different types of training, such as online courses, workshops, webinars, mentoring, or peer learning. You can also maximise the existing skills and expertise by utilising other volunteers to deliver training or mentorship. The aim is to match the training and development opportunities with the needs and interests of your volunteers, and to make them accessible, current, and interesting.

Encourage skills sharing and collaboration.

- You can also bridge the skills gap in your volunteer team by encouraging skill sharing and collaboration among your volunteers. This can help you create a culture of learning, innovation, and teamwork. You can encourage skills sharing and collaboration by creating areas for your volunteers to exchange ideas, knowledge, and experiences – this could be as simple as creating a WhatsApp group. You will be surprised at the skills that already exist within your team of volunteers.