

Recruiting Volunteers

Tips for advertising

- Use straightforward terminology. Is what you've written likely to be understood by someone completely new to your organisation?
- Expensive media campaigns are generally not very successful at generating enquiries at a local level. It is far better to put the time, money and effort into more locally focused efforts.
- Always be positive. Negative adverts (e.g. 'Our organisation to close unless you step forward now') are very unlikely to elicit a good outcome in the long term. You want people to respond enthusiastically to a positive opportunity – that way they are far more likely to stay involved.
- Some Volunteer Centres can support your advertising via their brokerage and social media platforms and their outreach events.
- Local community radio, local press and newsletters are effective in reaching potential volunteers.

Events

Running either an individual event or attending one arranged elsewhere (e.g. church fetes) is a way to meet a lot of people at once. This approach requires having people who are willing to enthusiastically approach people to talk to them about your organisations volunteering opportunities. This is not for everyone and some will undoubtedly find it out of their comfort zone.

Choosing an eye-catching activity that shows your organisation at its best is most likely to make an impression. Expect to talk to a lot of people and for many of them to not be interested.

Printed resources

Printed resources can appear in many forms and are a way to give information that can be taken away to digest, such as newsletters. Some of the templates in this booklet could be suitable, particularly the role descriptions. Getting people to register their interest is one thing, giving them information to take away to find out more is even better.

Leaflets

Leaflets are a good method to make an impression about the type of activity as well as giving information about the role. For both, having someone to contact and ideally an event to attend would be ideal. Printed resources can be expensive and thought needs to be put into where to put them.

Online advertising

Online advertising has the potential to reach a large number of people who are actively searching for opportunities online. Having your own website or social media pages is a very useful tool to refer potential volunteers to and you can use them to put up information about the role and your organisation.

Kent Volunteers

Kent Volunteers is a regional volunteering for the county - you might also consider advertising on your local Volunteer Centre's website. There are many other options for online volunteer advertising that cover your local geographical area or via certain types of volunteering.

Shortlisting volunteers

- Application forms are useful in preparing for interviews. They are a good way of recording information for future use as well as monitoring and evaluation.
- Keep application forms as simple and clear as possible.
- Where people have to handwrite information leave them plenty of space. For example leave plenty of space if people have to write their name and address on a form.
- You may be able to offer support in filling in application forms.

What do you need to know about the volunteer

Before collecting data ensure you comply with the latest Data Protection Act/ GDPR.

- Name, address, telephone numbers (home/mobile), e-mail address, etc.
- What is the volunteer's length of commitment and availability?
- Does the volunteer have any special needs or requirements?
- Are there any possible restrictions? E.g. police record
- Are there any limiting factors such as transport availability or personal commitments?
- Has the volunteer any previous experience, relevant skills or interests?
- Can the volunteer show an understanding of the importance of confidentiality?
- Would the volunteer prefer group work or one-to-one work?
- Does the volunteer prefer a structured or flexible environment?
- Does the volunteer have the ability to take on responsibility?
- Can the volunteer relate to others?

What do volunteers need to know about your organisation?

It is best to have information in writing for volunteers to consider:

- Who is the contact person and what is his/her role?
- What does your organisation do?
- What does the voluntary role involve?
- When and where does the voluntary role take place?
- What sort of commitment is required? E.g. two days a week for six months?
- Are working times fixed or flexible to suit the volunteer's needs?
- What skills are needed? Which skills are necessary? Which are desirable?
- To whom are the volunteers responsible?
- What support is offered? Who provides this support?
- What are the expenses available? E.g. transport, childcare, lunch.
- Are references required?
- Is a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check required?
- Is information on relevant policies provided?