

Developing your Volunteering Strategy

Overview

This information page is designed to take you through a series of questions and considerations to enable you to construct a Volunteering Strategy for your organisation. Whatever the size of your organisation or the ambitions you have for volunteers, having a Volunteering Strategy is valuable to formalising volunteering within your organisation and helps to outline and prepare for a sustainable future of volunteer involvement.

On this page

- The importance of a Volunteering Strategy
- Who is a Volunteering Strategy for?
- How to approach creating a Volunteering Strategy
- Structuring your Volunteering Strategy
- Measuring success and future planning
- Commitment to volunteer support and best practice
- Considerations when developing your Volunteering Strategy
- Using your Volunteer Strategy
- Questions to bear in mind

Get in touch

If you feel that you would like some support in creating a Volunteering Strategy you can contact your local Volunteer Centre

Other documents that may be helpful in creating a Volunteering Strategy are:



[Creating a Volunteering Policy](#)



[Model Volunteering Policy](#)

The importance of a Volunteering Strategy

A volunteer strategy demonstrates your organisation's commitment to volunteering and its volunteers. It outlines how volunteers contribute to your mission and goals, setting clear expectations and ambitions. A strong strategy acknowledges both the benefits and challenges of volunteer engagement, ensuring transparency in your approach.

Who is a Volunteering Strategy for?

A volunteer strategy is relevant to organisations of all sizes that involve volunteers. It provides clarity for staff, trustees, funders, and volunteers themselves. Whether integrated into a broader organisational strategy or a standalone document, it should align with your vision and values, making it accessible to all stakeholders.

How to approach creating a Volunteering Strategy

Developing a volunteer strategy requires time, resources, and input from various stakeholders. Unlike policy development, which follows a structured format, creating a strategy benefits from collaboration. Engage existing

volunteers, staff (including senior management and volunteer coordinators), trustees, service users, funders, and community partners.

Gathering insights can be done through meetings (in-person or online), surveys (kept short and anonymous for honest feedback), and informal discussions. Meeting stakeholders where they are, rather than expecting them to fit into new schedules, increases engagement. Allow sufficient time for meaningful contributions, ensuring a comprehensive and representative strategy.

Structuring Your Volunteer Strategy

A volunteer strategy should be clear, practical, and aligned with your organisation's objectives. It may include:

- A vision for volunteering within your organisation
- Commitments to diversity and inclusion, ensuring accessibility for volunteers from various backgrounds and experiences
- Goals for volunteer recruitment, retention, and support
- The role of volunteers in delivering impact
- Plans for monitoring progress and reviewing the strategy over time

The strategy can be structured around themes identified through stakeholder discussions or aligned with other organisational plans. Visual elements such as flowcharts or volunteer-made videos can make it more engaging and user-friendly.

Measuring success and future planning

Volunteer strategies are typically time-specific, such as a five-year plan, with clear review points. Key objectives should be measurable, ensuring progress is tracked effectively. Regular evaluation allows for adjustments based on evolving volunteer trends and organisational needs.

Commitment to volunteer support and best practice

A well-developed volunteer strategy reflects your organisation's dedication to best practices. It ideally outlines how you will:

- Provide high-quality training, supervision, and safeguarding for volunteers
- Recognise the value of volunteers across the organisation
- Support volunteer managers with adequate resources and training
- Ensure all staff understand the role of volunteers and contribute to a positive volunteer experience

Considerations when developing your strategy

When crafting your volunteer strategy, consider the following key areas:

- **Best practice standards:** Align with frameworks such as [Investing in Volunteers](#) and the [Code of Practice for Involving Volunteers](#)
- **Diversity and inclusion:** Assess how you recruit, train, and support volunteers to create accessible opportunities. Consider targeted recruitment to increase representation of underrepresented groups.
- **Financial planning:** Budget for volunteer support, recognising that effective volunteer involvement requires investment in staff, training, and infrastructure.
- **Volunteer trends and innovation:** Stay informed about evolving volunteer practices and flexible engagement opportunities. Utilise technology and creative approaches to enhance the volunteer experience.
- **Impact measurement:** Commit to collecting and analysing volunteer data to track trends, demonstrate impact, and improve volunteer engagement.
- **Organisational culture:** Ensure that volunteer support is embedded in staff job descriptions, training, and overall organisational priorities. Assess whether all staff interacting with volunteers have the necessary knowledge and training.

Using Your Volunteer Strategy

Your volunteer strategy is intended to be a practical tool, guiding decision-making and reinforcing your commitment to valuing volunteers. It should be

easily found and easy to understand. Consider integrating it into staff training and volunteer inductions to embed its principles throughout your organisation. By thoughtfully developing and implementing a volunteer strategy, your organisation can create a welcoming, inclusive, and impactful volunteering environment that benefits both volunteers and the communities they serve.

Questions to bear in mind

These questions can be used to guide your stakeholder discussions and/or designing the content in your Volunteering Strategy.

Remember, if you feel that you would like some support in creating a Volunteering Policy you can contact your local Volunteer Centre

1. Why does your organisation involve volunteers?
2. What does volunteering add to your organisation?
3. What roles do volunteers undertake currently and what do you hope volunteers can be involved with within the time frame for this strategy?
4. What makes these roles attractive and meaningful to volunteers?
5. Are these roles attractive to a diverse range of people wishing to support your organisation in different ways?
6. What will make your volunteering opportunities appealing to volunteers with different motivations and needs?

7. How will volunteer voices be heard throughout the time frame of this strategy?
8. How will you evaluate the success of volunteering and measure the impact of volunteers?
9. How will you recognise the achievements of volunteers?
10. Are you undertaking a cost estimation and capacity assessment of supporting volunteers in line with quality standards?
11. Do those who support volunteers feel confident and competent in the role?
12. Do you have adequate funding to support volunteering, or do you need to identify and apply for additional funding?
13. Does everyone in your organisation (stakeholders listed above) understand the role of volunteers? Are there structures to address concerns?
14. Do a range of volunteers' images and voices come through via your organisational materials including social media, webpages and annual report, displaying the value of and welcome to a wide range of volunteers?