



# Promoting and recruiting volunteers

In Part 2 of our 3 Part series on *Future proofing your volunteer program* we look at the various ways of finding volunteers, where to promote your volunteer roles and how to make the onboarding process a success.

## How and where do I find Volunteers?

**Finding the right volunteers can sometimes be challenging but .... never impossible.**

Advertise your volunteer roles in as many different places as you can to attract various applicants.

Try some of the strategies below to help you find a volunteer with the perfect fit for the role and for your organisation.

- Word of mouth is a great way to recruit volunteers. You may like to consider asking;
  - Your existing volunteers if they know of anyone suitable or interested in volunteering
  - Your local networks
  - Your community partners
  - Your Corporate Partners.
  - Peak volunteer bodies such as Volunteering Australia.
- Approach your local community college, TAFE or University. Quite often students need a work placement to help them meet the requirements of their studies, so this option is a win for both parties. If the student has an enjoyable time with your organisation they may just come back seeking a longer term role. Incorporating this strategy and investment really does pay off - particularly if you are looking for someone with specific skills eg marketing or IT Support.
- Attend events such as Seniors Expos and University Student Expos to promote digital volunteering opportunities.

## Recruiting volunteer roles online

**Cast your net wide.**

Awesome volunteers come from diverse backgrounds with a variety of skills. Tips for advertising and recruiting online include:

- Using Social Media which is a great tool for attracting digitally savvy volunteers.
- Taking applications throughout the year to boost your volunteer database (which can be as simple as a spreadsheet). You can then reach out to them when an opportunity becomes available.

- For those volunteers who are passionate about ethics consider advertising on the website <https://www.ethicaljobs.com.au/>
- Try Seek Volunteering <https://www.volunteer.com.au>
- Check out Go Volunteer <https://govolunteer.com.au/>
- Approach your state volunteering peak body eg Centre for Volunteering <https://www.volunteering.com.au>

Remember our tips from Part 1 on describing the volunteer role and what people will get out of it clearly.

## Finding a good fit

Take the time to interview your potential volunteer and conduct reference checks, so you know they are the right fit for your organisation. This also helps the volunteer to get to know you and your organisation better.

Check out our tips in Part 1 of this series on planning volunteer recruitment, such as creating position descriptions and knowing the steps they will need to take before they start eg police checks. These will help you to decide if the potential volunteer is a good fit for your organisation.

## Onboarding your volunteers

### **Make the process fast and seamless.**

Use the volunteers' time wisely right from the outset.

For volunteers with digital skills, consider using an app to allow applicants to submit their documentation quickly and easily. It will paint a positive picture of your organisation and confirms it is a place worth investing in. The bonus for your organisation is that the volunteer can hit the ground running!

Some extra onboarding tips include:

- Consider how you interact with your volunteers from the start. Do you adopt a personalised and meaningful approach or is it mostly transactional?
- Provide choice and control over how the volunteer may like to work. Make time to discuss how this may happen with your new volunteer.
- Offer smaller "opt in" style project work to ease volunteers into the workplace. This allows the volunteer to test if the workplace and type of work is right for them and allows the organisation to ensure they have the "best fit" volunteer for the role.
- Assign tasks that value the volunteers time and the knowledge and skills they hold. This increases the volunteers self confidence and motivation as well as potentially generating a willingness to do more.
- Provide the right resources and tools for the volunteer to be successful. As mentioned in Part 1 of this series, you can secure the right tools and resources by thinking creatively on how to use your Be Connected grant funds.
- Manage the expectations of the volunteer with one-to-one meetings to discuss their skills, experiences and goals. Hold these regularly to ensure your volunteer remains actively engaged and are achieving what you need them to in the role.

- Establish clear boundaries associated with the role from the very beginning. Letting the volunteer know what is expected from the outset is part of setting the ground rules. This will help to make their transition into the organisation much easier and will help you to mitigate any potential risks. This can also help you to manage volunteers if they are working remotely.
- Discuss with the volunteer how their digital role impacts the organisation and wider community. Sometimes it might help to use an analogy to explain the impact. A good one to use is the analogy of throwing a pebble into a lake and watching the ripples spread out across the water.

While you are onboarding a new volunteer, set a time to check in with them one-to-one after they have been working in the role for a couple of weeks or month's time. Having this in your diaries from this point will help to remember to do this important step!



**TOP TIP:** Increased job satisfaction has a positive impact upon retention rates and overall success of your volunteer program.

## Future proofing your volunteer program

This resource is Part 1 of a three part series on future proofing your volunteer program for organisations in Good Things Foundation's national digital inclusion network.

Next in the series:

- [Volunteer recruitment planning](#)
- [Managing and upskilling volunteers](#)