

## Planning on using volunteers in your organisation

- Make sure your organisation understands why volunteers are/should be involved and their value
- Provide volunteer tasks which are varied and innovative – they don't just fill a gap where you are cutting resources
- Certify volunteering roles are open to everyone – you have a recruitment process agreed and suitable to the role
- Ensure that role descriptions are in place and accurate - these can then be used to review the volunteer's progress
- Make sure there is a volunteering policy in place – this will set out expectations, expenses, procedures and who they should speak to with any issues
- Include volunteer expenses – best practice states that out of pocket expenses are reimbursed, but your organisation may want to define this in your own volunteer policy
- Provide someone who can oversee the volunteers and be the main point of contact for them
- Identify how you are going to develop and recognise the volunteers

Check out [www.teamherts.org](http://www.teamherts.org) for more resources and guidance

## Recruitment

- Create a plan before you start recruiting – looking at your marketing mix
- Make sure you market your roles correctly – targeting the right audiences
- Keep the message clear, simple and to the point
- Don't overload any adverts with too much information
- Use attention grabbing headlines/images and design to engage people
- Use a wide range of advertising tools – think outside the box e.g. a radio advert
- Follow up promptly once you have interest
- Make sure you have a selection process and that you keep to it
- From the volunteer showing initial interest, to meeting and placing them into the role, make sure the process is as short and efficient as possible
- Be clear that you have the right person for the job. If you don't, go back to advertising for that role

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## Retaining volunteers

- Understand why your volunteers come back – what are they looking to achieve from being a volunteer?
- What motivates them to keep supporting your organisation?
- Look and plan at how you will develop your volunteers within your capabilities
- Keep the tasks varied and suitable
- Keep an open dialogue about what is needed from the volunteer
- Include volunteers in decisions that impact them – try to avoid a ‘them and us’ mentality
- Make sure that there is a good relationship with the manager/supervisor
- Put a recognition programme in place to thank volunteers

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## Managing challenging volunteer situations

- Make sure your organisation has a range of appropriate policies and procedures
- Make sure staff are aware of them and how they impact your role, along with your volunteers
- Try and identify an issue before it becomes a problem
- Always speak to volunteers in a separate room – make sure it's quiet
- Don't make a big scene – keep any confrontation to a minimum
- Listen to the issue – where has this come from? Why do they feel this way?
- Identify an outcome with the volunteer which both parties are happy with
- Set a date to review the outcome, where both the volunteer and supervisor can talk
- Finish all meetings on a positive note

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## Diversity

- Where does your organisation stand regarding diversity? Get existing staff and volunteers on board
- Draw up an equality and diversity policy – taking input from everyone
- Review your volunteer programme in accordance with equality legislation
- Develop inclusive and diverse volunteering opportunities
- Give an inclusive image of volunteering through marketing and advertisements of both volunteer roles and the organisation
- Promote volunteer roles in unfamiliar places with targeted advertisement which attracts the right audience
- Provide fair, transparent and flexible recruitment process
- Assign a champion for diversity – make sure they have an active part in the organisation
- Take a person-centred approach

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## Youth volunteering

- Think about the benefits of using young people in your organisation
- Get staff to get behind the idea of including more young people within the organisation – what can their role be to encourage more young people to take part?
- Keep in mind the barriers young people face and develop suitable roles which reflect this
- Talk to your insurance company and make sure your volunteer insurance covers under 18s
- Young people under 18 don't need to be DBS checked in most situations, but those working with them do
- Use straightforward language and avoid jargon
- Make sure that there is a point of contact who can support them, bolster their confidence and help with any problems
- Ensure they are respected and always valued

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## Volunteering and the law

- Volunteers don't have the equivalent of employment rights. However, in rare circumstances, volunteers can be viewed as workers or employees in the eyes of the law – you must avoid this happening
- Some legislation does explicitly include volunteers e.g. DBS, benefits
- Volunteers retain the rights we share as citizens
- Avoid any type of contract – should that be written or verbal
- A contract includes: consideration, intent, offer and acceptance
- To avoid an employment relationship, avoid payment – money, perks (apart from out of pocket expenses)
- Avoid obligations e.g. “you must work for us for 6 months” – this can count as a contract
- Create a distinction – different procedures for volunteers and workers
- Mind your language – use terminology such as ‘role’ rather than ‘job description’, ‘volunteer agreement’ not ‘contract’ – expect rather than oblige
- Health and safety legislation applies to all – make sure this is clear
- A DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check does not need to happen for all volunteers – only when they are taking part in certain types of activities
- If you require a volunteer to have a DBS check then make sure you apply for the right level of check

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## Volunteers and GDPR

- Personal data “means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (data subject).”
- A volunteer’s data must be treated with the same level of care as employees or clients
- Volunteers must be aware of the use of their own personal data
- Ensure volunteers are aware that they are agreeing to have the information they provide to you held for the purposes you’ve specified
- Always remove volunteer details as promptly as possible when no longer required, unless required by law or contract
- All volunteers must be trained and equipped to protect data – this includes trustees
- Make sure that volunteers are aware that any information they handle of a personal nature is also covered by your organisation’s policies, and that they need to follow them
- Be aware of under 17’s – you need parental consent to retain their data
- Review policies regularly and make sure staff/volunteers know what they should and shouldn’t be doing with that personal information
- Make sure your clients/users/volunteers know what you do with their information. Write a privacy notice and make sure it is easily accessible for anyone
- Ensure that the information you hold is held securely
- Register with Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO)
- Consider and agree the roles and responsibilities within your organisation for data protection

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