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Volunteering in the arts

a toolkit created by
**Voluntary Arts and
Volunteering
England**



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Foreword

Millions of people volunteer in the arts in England on a regular basis. Their crucial contribution is all too often overlooked but it is clear that many arts organisations wouldn't survive without their volunteers.

Voluntary Arts England and Arts Council England are committed to improving the quality and quantity of volunteering in the arts. This toolkit is part of a range of activities we are undertaking to improve the diversity of who volunteers, as well as the overall volunteer experience.

Linking arts organisations to the wider volunteering world is a key aspect of this toolkit and our work in general. We are eager not to replicate what is already happening but to document the wide range of support that arts organisations can draw on. The toolkit outlines the expert guidance available, from the national 'Do It' database, to the network of local Volunteer Centres, to the sterling work of Volunteering England and the Investing in Volunteers quality standard.

When developing this toolkit, we have found that many arts organisations struggle to recruit or retain volunteers without a dedicated volunteer manager. We would strongly urge all arts organisations working with volunteers to treat the role of volunteer manager seriously (whether this is a paid post or is, itself, a volunteer position). There are also a range of small changes that can be implemented to improve an organisation's volunteer management systems.

This might mean sharing best practice ideas with other arts organisations, benchmarking services against ground-breaking local volunteer services or attending a volunteer management course at a local Council for Voluntary Service. Hopefully, the toolkit will be a useful addition to this process and will provide some quick fixes for the managers or facilitators of arts organisations.

Robin Simpson,
Voluntary Arts Chief Executive



1. Introduction

Volunteering in the arts is taking place within all types of arts groups, from grassroots level to wider cultural programmes within museums, libraries and galleries. It is a healthy, vibrant and dynamic type of volunteering with a significant impact at local level. Projects offer opportunities for participants to gain increased workplace confidence, develop a wide range of transferable skills and, where training is offered, vocational skills and qualifications.

This toolkit has been produced to support small and medium-sized arts groups who struggle to improve the support they offer volunteers. The toolkit includes ideas, suggestions and recommendations as well as a range of checklists for those new to working with volunteers. We have included within the document a range of case studies to celebrate what is already happening across the sector.

The toolkit has been written by Voluntary Arts and Volunteering England. Drawing on both organisations' experience and knowledge of arts/cultural volunteering, the toolkit uses a wide range of best-practice quality assurance processes and procedures, including those that underpin Investors in Volunteers.



What is a volunteer?

Volunteering England¹ defines 'volunteering' as:

'any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives.'

'Volunteer', therefore, may refer to a wide range of people. Voluntary Arts identifies four broad categories of volunteer, which may not be exhaustive:

- committee volunteers: those who serve on boards of management
- organising volunteers: those who co-ordinate the work of volunteers
- service volunteers: those who contribute to the running of the organisation
- process volunteers: those who direct, shape and lead the artistic work of the organisation, e.g. directors, conductors, producers, choreographers, designers, tutors, curators, conservators, promoters, tour guides, etc

Whatever they do, however, anyone who donates their time freely to an organisation in order to benefit others is a volunteer.

¹ <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/WhoWeAre/Who+we+are#vol>

Member or volunteer?

Some cultural organisations may understand ‘volunteer recruitment’ as ‘finding more members, audience members or participants’. However, there is a difference:

- member: someone who belongs to a group, club or organisation
- audience member: someone who benefits from the artistic output of an organisation
- participant: someone who takes part in the activities of an organisation
- volunteer: someone who freely offers to do something for an individual, group, club or organisation



This distinction is less clear in the cultural sector than in others, as our members, audience members and participants are often the people who do things for or with us. However, you need to be clear that a volunteer is someone who freely offers to do something that benefits someone other than themselves or their family members – whatever other role they fill or whatever you call them.

This is important, because the way you approach someone as a potential volunteer and the support you offer them will be different to the way you approach and support potential members, participants and audience members.

What are ‘cultural volunteers’?

Cultural volunteers are like volunteers in other sectors in some ways, but unlike them in others. When we talk about volunteer recruitment in the cultural sector, we are looking for others who already share our interest, skills and experience in our art or craft form to give their support to an organisation designed to serve that interest.

2. Recruiting volunteers

There are lots of reasons for recruiting volunteers, but you may:

- be looking for new energy, ideas and approaches
- want to make your group more attractive to funders
- need more people to undertake operational roles such as fundraising
- want to offer more activities, meet a new need, expand what you do, or work with more diverse communities
- need more trustees

Whatever your reasons, before you begin you should do some planning. How much you do will depend on your organisation and its activities, but the principles are the same for everyone.

What motivates volunteers to take part?

There are as many motivations for volunteering in the arts as there are people taking part. For example, people may want to volunteer in order to:

- learn something new
- practise an existing skill
- realise a long-held ambition or dream
- find friends with similar interests
- be recognised in the community
- give something back
- teach others
- keep alive their interest in a specialist field
- find out what's going on in an art or craft area
- create, produce or perform something of value

What do you want volunteers to do?

Unlike members, volunteers are recruited specifically to do something. Therefore, the first question you need to ask is: what are you recruiting them to do?

- think practically about tasks that staff members currently don't have time to do or about what support they might need to add value to their work
- think realistically about what an individual volunteer or group of volunteers could achieve and what training and support you will need to provide them with
- think sympathetically about what might interest a potential volunteer and benefit their personal development
- identify where possible challenging roles that would offer stimulating and creative volunteer placements

Once you know what you want volunteers to do, you can start to write role/task descriptions. These set out the specific activities a particular volunteer will undertake. They are like job descriptions, but you should use a more relaxed terminology – hence ‘role description’, to avoid implying a contract of employment.

You can find more information in the [creating volunteer roles section of Volunteering England’s Good Practice Bank](#).²

What support will you offer?

Your volunteers will be involved in or participate in your art or craft form with the support, encouragement and opportunities offered by your organisation. Think about the benefits you offer. Do members get discounts on products? Do you offer them opportunities to perform? Will they receive materials and information they cannot find elsewhere? Are they helping keep a traditional art or craft form alive for future generations? From a member’s point of view, you need to answer the question, ‘What’s in it for me?’

All volunteers require support. The kind of support you provide will depend on the nature of their tasks and their needs, but key elements can include:

- induction
- role description
- supervision
- training

You can find more information in the [support and supervision section of Volunteering England’s Good Practice Bank](#).³

Case study – F-IRE Jazz Collective

The F-IRE collective is a not-for-profit collective for young jazz musicians, which is widely credited with having revitalised the UK jazz scene. They were looking for a volunteer to help the charity with its financial work including preparing the end-of-year accounts. Through Reach, they found accountant Rejaul Islam, who works for a company in London. F-IRE Chairman, Peter Slavid, says, ‘Rejaul has provided a lot of help contributing to the sustainability of the collective and allowing the other volunteers to spend more time on their music and the running of the organisation.’ Rejaul says, ‘It’s a really good feeling helping other people through volunteering.’

Credit: www.reachskills.org.uk

² [www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/creatingvolunteer roles](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/creatingvolunteer+roles)

³ <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/supportandsupervision>

How will you select?

In some cases, volunteering selection can be very informal and focus on an introductory chat about the role and the potential volunteer's interests. But if the role has some degree of responsibility – such as working with people, managing the box office, or working behind the scenes (on lighting or stage design, for example), then the selection procedure might need to be more formal.

Key elements of selection can include:

- application forms
- references
- interviews
- criminal record checks (especially if volunteers are working with children or vulnerable people)
- health checks
- equality and diversity

You can find more information about selection and all aspects of the volunteer recruitment process in [Volunteering England's Recruitment Guide](#).

Finding volunteers

There are many ways of finding volunteers and these will differ from area to area, but there are some key things to consider.

You may wish to start with your current members, audiences and participants, as they already have a connection with the group or organisation. Advertising through other voluntary arts groups in the area might also be a good idea.

Finding volunteers – think beyond your group or community

Recruitment can be through:

- word of mouth
- your local volunteer centre
- advertising
- talks
- flyers
- events
- open days
- inspirational case studies
- taster or sampling sessions
- editorial press features or articles
- promotional campaigns such as Make a Difference Day, Volunteers Week, Voluntary Arts Week

Volunteer centres

Volunteer centres are local organisations providing support and expertise within the local community to potential volunteers, existing volunteers and organisations that involve volunteers. Their brokerage support quickly matches interest to local opportunities. They can help you design volunteer roles, advertise them and find the right volunteers for you. They can also signpost potential volunteers to you or advertise your group more widely.

More information about them, what they do and contact details of your local volunteer centre can be found on the [Volunteering England website](#).⁴

Councils for Voluntary Service

If you don't have a volunteer centre in your area, your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) may be able to help you. More information is available on the [NAVCA website](#).⁵ Local CVSs also offer lots of training and support, including help with fundraising or creative alliances with the wider local voluntary and charitable sector. Many volunteer centres are based within their local CVS. It is worth making contact with them to see what type of help and advice they can offer, including support with capacity-building training or help with securing further funding.



Do-it.org.uk

[Do-it](#) is a national online database of volunteering opportunities in the UK. It is managed by YouthNet and is extremely well used. You can register both volunteer vacancies and groups on there. You can also encourage volunteers to use it if they want to find different or new volunteer opportunities.

Specific types of volunteers

There are many types of volunteering opportunities that can be offered within an arts/cultural setting. The list is endless – from administration to project development, to name but a few. Identifying what type of support you need is crucial to the whole process. Don't forget too that having experienced volunteers on your board can also add value to your planning processes and strengthen the skill base of your management committee.

⁴ <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/WhatWeDo/Local+and+Regional>

⁵ <http://webdb.navca.org.uk/home.aspx>

- younger people⁶
- older people⁷
- trustees⁸
- skilled people⁹
- professionals¹⁰
- media and communications professionals¹¹

Marketing

Don't forget to:

- describe the volunteer role and what key skills are required
- give details of when it's available
- say where the volunteering will take place
- explain how much time individuals will need to commit to the role
- explain what's in it for them
- give the name of a key person on all your publicity materials
- recruit where possible for volunteers for skills needed so you can plug any skill gaps in your organisation or group

⁶ <http://vinspired.com>

⁷ <http://www.csv-rsvp.org.uk/site/home.htm>

⁸ <http://trusteenet.org.uk/jobs-search>

⁹ <http://www.reachskills.org.uk>

¹⁰ http://www.bitc.org.uk/community/employee_volunteering/prohelp/index.html

¹¹ <http://www.mediatrust.org/get-support/one-to-one-support/media-matching/>

3. Equality and diversity

Looking for volunteers like the ones you have is a sensible approach to recruitment, with one proviso: if you don't look beyond your existing group you could become a clique, or be seen to be excluding others on purpose. Make sure your recruitment isn't discriminatory in any way. Publicise your group well, work across cultural boundaries and be prepared to welcome new members who aren't 'just like you'.

There are many benefits to working with a more diverse group of volunteers, including:

- the positive impact of fresh approaches to the organisation's work
- incorporating a wider range of ideas might help your organisation to improve its service and work more efficiently to fulfil its aims
- reflecting the local community can boost an organisation's credibility and improve its ability to focus on local needs
- offering everyone a fair chance to contribute and avoiding the exclusion of people through labelling

Case study – Star and Shadow Cinema (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne)

The Star and Shadow Cinema is a registered Community Interest Company and is run entirely by volunteer members, including those whose first language is not English. The aim is to show a truly independent programme of inspirational and inspired films as cheaply as possible, as well as provide a venue for artists and musicians of all varieties. The Star and Shadow Cinema is a cosy venue, a haven from the mundane mainstream of film and music plus a nursery for independent creativity and thinking. The cinema also includes a social space with quiet bar and cafe. The Star and Shadow has built up an expertise in working with volunteers who are new to the area, providing real opportunities to gain work experience or learn new skills.

Policy

It's a good idea to have an equality and diversity policy that covers how and where you will recruit. At its simplest, such a policy states that the group or organisation will not discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of differences other than suitability for the role.

As well as saying what it won't do, an equality and diversity policy can include a statement about how the group or organisation will aim to create an inclusive environment, including positive action. Positive action involves encouraging less represented groups, for example black, gay or disabled members of the community, to volunteer.



Be aware of potential barriers

Remember, ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in your activity doesn't mean just thinking about disabled people. People can be excluded by factors such as their financial situation, the time available to them, and their childcare or caring responsibilities.

Some of the things you might want to think about include:

- physical accessibility of the venue or location
- requirements of the role, such as time commitment
- whether you can cover travel expenses
- if you can provide childcare or cover the cost
- is there a religious aspect to your organisation or activity
- does a role require a volunteer to be CRB checked
- is involvement in your group or organisation restricted to a particular group of people, e.g. women? Is this relevant or necessary
- do you have a welcoming and friendly atmosphere
- are there long-standing members who can act as mentors to newly recruited volunteers
- is information in easy-to-read format with appropriate illustrations and images
- do you have a disabled spokesperson who can act as advocate on behalf of the group or members
- are you able to provide appropriate tools, resources, kit and software to people with a disability

More information

You can find more information in the [equality and diversity section of Volunteering England's Good Practice Bank](#).¹²

Volunteer policies

A volunteer policy (including health and safety) sets out what potential volunteers can expect while volunteering for your organisation and, vice versa, what you can expect from them. It ensures that everyone knows where they stand and provides clear procedures on what happens if anything goes wrong. It also sends a message that you are a volunteer-friendly organisation and have really thought about the kind of opportunities that you provide. Make sure occasional or episodic volunteering opportunities are included within your policy.

¹² <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/equalopportunitiesdiversity/Equality+and+diversity.htm>

4. Retaining volunteers

Although it's not always possible (or desirable) to keep the same volunteers for a long period of time, it's worth looking at what you can do to reduce the turnover of volunteers in your group or organisation. After all, you've already gone through the process of recruiting, inducting, training and supporting the volunteers. In addition, when they leave they may take a wealth of knowledge and experience with them.

If you follow the guidance in this toolkit you should be on your way to creating a volunteer programme that people want to stay involved with.

Aspects of a volunteer project that is likely to retain volunteers

- vision and direction
- training and accreditation
- supervision and feedback
- responsibility and progression
- equal opportunities
- health and safety

Create rewarding roles

You should build retention into your volunteer programme before you even begin recruitment – by creating roles that are attractive and rewarding, as well as meeting your core objectives.

When drawing up a role or task description, think about what you need and want the volunteer to do. What is there in the role that would attract and keep volunteers? Is it a chance to learn new skills and meet new people, or an opportunity to put existing skills and knowledge to good use? Can the role be a springboard into other activities?

Case study – The Players' Theatre

Australian Scott MacKay came to London from Queensland with a strong marketing background. Through Reach, he was taken on by The Players' Theatre to promote their Victorian Music Hall shows. Players' Director, Bill Hanlon, says, 'Scott is very energetic in following up on leads to help make sure every show is full and he helps design promotional materials. Scott now has a paid job as a publications officer in London but he is still giving his time to help the Players' Theatre.'

Credit: www.reachskills.org.uk

Be aware of motivations

Being aware of a volunteer's motivations is useful because it can help you plan the volunteer's journey during their time with your organisation and ensure you meet their needs as well as your own. An informal chat at the recruitment stage can be a helpful way of discovering a person's motivations for wanting to volunteer with you.

Motivations may include:

- learning new skills
- using existing skills
- addressing a specific problem in the community
- having fun
- gaining work experience
- feeling useful
- getting out of the house
- making new friends
- improving levels of health and wellbeing

Remember, too, that motivations can change over time, which makes ongoing communication with your volunteers very important.

Support and supervision

Providing good support and supervision helps to retain volunteers by:

- helping you identify problems and solutions early
- ensuring you know how they're feeling about their role
- identifying external issues that may impact on their volunteering
- making them feel valued
- having clear goals and aspirations
- giving real opportunities to assess progress by either one-to-one reviews or appraisals

Reward and recognition

Volunteers are more likely to stay with you if they feel they're an important part of the organisation. There are many ways of doing this, and different people value different forms of recognition. Therefore, you'll need to think about your own situation and volunteers, but some suggestions are:

- involve volunteers in discussion and decision making
- hold celebration events
- provide certificates after a certain length of service or at the completion of a project
- formal accreditation, e.g. NVQs
- identify opportunities for additional responsibility
- ask longer-term volunteers to mentor or buddy new volunteers
- develop specific social activities such as group lunches or coffee mornings

- remember to say thank you
- provide training

Gifts

Some organisations like to reward their volunteers with gifts. This is okay as a one-off, but any regular gift could be seen as payment, which you want to avoid as it could confer employment rights on the volunteer.

The rule of thumb is that a volunteer should not be rewarded with anything that either represents a cost to the organisation or that the volunteer could use to make a profit. This isn't to say that an organisation can't reward their volunteers with gifts or free tickets when they leave or after many years of service, but these should be small rewards.

Exit interviews

Whatever you do, volunteers will leave. When they do, exit interviews are useful for finding out why and evaluating their experience as a whole. This will help you to think about your volunteer programme and how to develop it. Some individuals may leave without having an opportunity to meet with you. Where this happens, a quick email, telephone call or short questionnaire can be effective at finding out their reasons for leaving. Feedback from these meetings is imperative in improving service delivery and performance, which ultimately will impact on the overall volunteer experience.



You can find more information in the [reward, recognition and retention](#) section of [Volunteering England's Good Practice Bank](#).¹³

¹³ <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/retention/index>

5. Induction and training

The purpose of induction and training is to ensure that volunteers are able to carry out their role as effectively as possible.



Induction

Induction introduces new volunteers to the organisation and their role in it. You may want to consider putting together an induction pack that contains most of the information. You might also send this to anyone who enquires about, or shows an interest in, volunteering with your group or organisation so they can make an informed decision about taking up an opportunity. Key volunteers who have been with you for some time can be very helpful in this process and some really welcome the opportunity of playing a part in designing key documents.

Pre-arrival

This forms part of the recruitment process and will consist of any information about the organisation and the role that you send the volunteer before they start with you, such as:

- details about your organisation and what it does
- volunteer role description(s)
- contact details and address, including directions and/or map of how to get there
- an application form
- a volunteer handbook (if you have one)

Organisational induction

Induction should cover what the organisation's goals are and how it goes about achieving them, as well as helping the volunteers understand where they fit within the organisation as a whole. You might include:

- background/history of the organisation
- mission statement
- services provided and client groups
- organisation chart
- talks from paid staff and established volunteers about their roles in relation to volunteers and the organisation as a whole
- case studies and personal quotes
- personal testimony can add depth and scope to induction discussions, such as current number of volunteers, number of hours they commit, and examples of how volunteers have used their volunteer experience to enrich their lives or improve their levels of employability

Local induction

You need to make sure that volunteers have a clear understanding of their role and how they will carry it out, as well as site-specific information and guidance on support and supervision mechanisms, such as:

- health and safety issues, e.g. first aid procedures, accident reporting, policy on smoking, emergency exits and evacuation procedures
- financial issues, e.g. how to claim expenses (and what can be claimed)
- volunteer agreement (what the volunteer can expect from the organisation, and vice versa)
- arrangements for support and supervision, including, if appropriate, allocating a key member of staff, mentor or buddy
- problem-solving procedures (discipline/grievance/complaints)
- training programme/training needs identification process
- relevant policies, e.g. confidentiality, data protection, phone/internet use, computers

Induction

Key elements to include:

- introduce new volunteers to other staff and volunteers
- show them around the building
- explain who they can go to if they have any questions or problems
- show them where they will be based and any equipment they will be using
- let them know about breaks
- explain how to claim expenses and what forms they will need to use
- ask them to shadow other experienced volunteers or paid members of staff
- give an overview of all key health and safety issues

Group versus individual induction

The way you approach the induction process will depend on a number of factors, including the number of volunteers you have starting at the same time and the amount of space you have for group activities.

Group induction can take less time overall, and allows for discussions to take place where appropriate. It can also enable volunteers to start to build relationships and provide a support system for each other.

On the other hand, if you only have volunteers starting from time to time, it might put them off if they have to wait a while for others to join and form a group, so it could be as well to start people one at a time.

Some things might be covered more effectively in a group, for example confidentiality, and you may choose to wait and deal with that as part of a specific training session when you have more people to contribute to the discussion.

Case study – Durham City Council – Brass Festival

Brass is a celebration of a musical culture: the result of imaginative collaborations and commissions, constantly pushing the boundaries of what brass music is and can be. Through an ongoing partnership with Durham Music Service, Brass is enabling young people to volunteer alongside some of the most inspiring bands and artists in the world. Brass offers a diverse and adventurous line-up, packed with outdoor theatre, international collaborations, opera, dance and community activity. Volunteers are given specific inductions for specific roles, including chaperoning bands to gigs, educational workshops around the country, festival stewards, marketing distributors and enthusiastic communicators. Jose Santana, a 2010 Brass volunteer, says, 'It's great to be involved with a sensational international music festival and liaise with some brilliant people from all over the world.'

Training

Providing useful and relevant training helps volunteers develop their skills and competency, and can also motivate them to increase their involvement.

The training your volunteers receive will depend entirely on their roles, and on the number of volunteers you need to train at any one time. Initial training may be required to enable the volunteer to carry out their role effectively, and, depending on the role, may take hours, days or weeks to complete. Ongoing or refresher training may also be required to keep volunteers skills up to date, or to enable them to develop within the organisation and take on further tasks.

However you decide to address your volunteers' training needs, the key is to make sure that it is designed around their roles. Current volunteers can be extremely useful in helping identify the elements where they feel some formal training would be useful, and they will be able to feed in examples of situations that could form interesting case studies for discussion. Experienced volunteers might even find it interesting to deliver, or at least co-deliver, elements of a training programme for new volunteers.

On-the-job training

The most common way of training volunteers and probably the most economical is on-the-job training. This is most appropriate if you only take on one volunteer at a time and the work they'll be doing is relatively straightforward.

A member of staff, or another volunteer, will show the volunteer how to do a task and then supervise them as they do it. This method is effective as long as the person doing the training takes care to make sure the new volunteer really understands what they are meant to be doing, and the volunteer feels able to ask questions.



External trainers

Alternatively, you can send volunteers on a training course with a trainer from outside the organisation. This can work either with groups or individual volunteers, as you can either send one or two people on a public open course or book the trainer to do the course purely for your organisation. Arts practitioners are often brilliant trainers and are keen to pass on their skills to others, so use their support when possible.

In-house training

Another method of delivering training is to develop an in-house programme. This works best if you can take on volunteers in groups and you need to train them in fairly complex tasks, ideas or key arts skills.

There are lots of good 'train the trainer courses' out there, too, to enable the people delivering the training to keep up to date on current thinking about learning styles and training techniques.

You might also consider asking volunteers to take part in staff training if it's relevant. As well as saving money and time, it will also introduce volunteers to staff and help them to feel part of the team. Remember, however, to ensure there is a difference between staff and volunteer roles.



More information

You can find more information in the [induction and training section of Volunteering England's Good Practice Bank](#).

6. Support and supervision

All volunteers need support and supervision, but the form this takes will vary. Volunteers at a one-off event will need support different from what a long-term volunteer needs.

What is important is that support and supervision are appropriate to the role and the individual volunteer. Don't prejudge what support someone might need – ask them. Some people may need a little extra training or on-the-job coaching. Other volunteers may lack confidence, and need reassurance that they are doing things correctly.

Peer support

It's worth considering peer support. This could be through a buddying system, in which experienced volunteers support new ones. As well as providing support for new volunteers, a buddying system is a good way of recognising the expertise of experienced volunteers.

Another option is volunteer meetings. These provide an opportunity for volunteers to collectively contribute to the work and daily life of an organisation, and a chance for them to share their experiences.

You could also hold joint staff and volunteer meetings. This would offer both groups the opportunity to learn from each other and understand their respective roles. It also has the potential to increase the cohesion of your team.

Supervision meetings

One-to-one supervision meetings may not be appropriate for all models of volunteer involvement, but for many volunteers it's a good way of ensuring they have a chance to give and receive feedback.

Avoid supervision being seen as an 'appraisal'. Reassure volunteers that it's a chance to talk in a private space, and that it's as much about you listening to the volunteer as you talking to them.

Questions to ask include:

- what's going well?
- what problems or concerns do they have?
- are there any other tasks they would like to undertake?
- do they feel there is any support or training they need?
- are they happy within their role?
- can they think of what would improve their volunteering?
- what are their key goals and aspirations for the future?

Encourage volunteers to raise problems or concerns. It's much easier to deal with a problem at an early stage than let it grow into something which disrupts the work of the volunteer or even the whole volunteering programme.

Give clear feedback. Make sure you let volunteers know when you are pleased with their work. Where there are problems related to the volunteers work or behaviour, don't be afraid to raise them. Always remember that the problem is the behaviour not the individual, and phrase the issue as a shared issue.

Other models

Where regular formal supervision meetings are not appropriate to your involvement of volunteers, you should consider finding other ways of sharing and receiving feedback. The above questions are still likely to be a useful base for such conversations, but of course they may need to be adapted to the situation.

When involving volunteers in a one day-project, you may simply need to chat to everyone involved and make sure they are happy with the training they received and understand what they are doing. Briefings should also form part of one-to-one reviews. These are important to keep volunteers up to speed with key artistic activities such as events, exhibitions, festivals or performances. Volunteers should be aware of their role within these activities and what key responsibilities they will be undertaking.



More information

You can find more information in the [support and supervision section of Volunteering England's Good Practice Bank](#).

7. Expenses

Although unpaid, volunteering shouldn't leave volunteers out of pocket, otherwise it can be difficult to involve a diverse range of people. That's why it's good practice to reimburse a volunteer for all the expenses they incur where possible.

While this should be a straightforward matter, there are a number of legal and good-practice issues to be aware of, including ensuring you don't inadvertently grant employment rights to volunteers.



Be open and honest

The most important thing is to be open and honest with your volunteers from the start. They will then be able to make an informed decision about their volunteering. Be clear about:

- what expenses will and won't be reimbursed
- limits on the amount that can be claimed for expenses such as meals
- the process for submitting expenses claims, especially that receipts will need to be provided

Why reimburse expenses?

By ensuring that no volunteer is out of pocket due to their volunteering, a group or organisation will be increasing the potential number of volunteers that might support it.

Expecting volunteers to cover their own expenses could be a barrier to people with low incomes or little spare cash. It could also deter people who feel that they are already making a significant contribution of their time.

Refunding volunteer expenses is a legitimate financial element of any volunteer programme, so groups and organisations should take account of potential volunteer expenses in funding applications and budgets.

Which expenses should be reimbursed?

In general, any reasonable expense incurred as part of the volunteering activity should be reimbursed. This includes but is not limited to:

- travel, including to and from the place of volunteering
- meals and refreshments
- care of dependants, including children

- equipment such as protective clothing
- administration costs such as postage, phone calls and stationery

What is 'reasonable'?

Some expenses will be necessary and have a set cost, such as protective clothing and stationery. However, it may be worth considering buying these items centrally and distributing them to volunteers if possible.

For expenses such as meals and refreshments, it may be useful to set a limit. Many organisations do this so it's worth checking to see what others in your area do, or what general local costs are.

How to reimburse expenses

The process of reimbursing expenses should be based on a single, simple principle: only reimburse actual out-of-pocket expenses. This means volunteers submitting receipts that show what they have had to spend as a volunteer that they otherwise wouldn't have.

Be volunteer friendly

Be clear about what expenses will and won't be reimbursed. Be clear about limits on the amount that can be claimed for expenses such as meals.

Try to reimburse expenses as soon as possible. Try and reimburse in cash or by bank transfer rather than by cheque, which can often be inconvenient and delay payment.

It's okay to provide expenses payments in advance, as long as receipts are provided once the money has been spent and any remainder is returned. This can be particularly helpful for volunteers with a low income who may find it difficult to cover expenses upfront.

If the group or organisation can only process expenses claimed within a certain timeframe after incurred, then it's important to ensure volunteers know this so they don't miss the deadline.

Develop a simple expenses claim form. A sample can be found in the [Expenses and State Benefits](#)¹⁴ section of Volunteering England's Good Practice Bank.

Encourage all volunteers to claim expenses

Some volunteers may feel they don't need or even should not be offered expenses payments. However, ensuring everyone claims expenses helps a group or organisation to determine the full cost of a volunteer project. This will help in forecasting volunteer budgets and applying for appropriate funding.

If a volunteer really doesn't want to have their expenses reimbursed it is possible to set up a scheme whereby they donate these unclaimed expenses back to the group or organisation along with [Gift Aid](#).¹⁵ Guidance is available on [the HM Revenue and Customs \(HMRC\) website](#).¹⁶

¹⁴ <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/expenses/index>

Do not pay a flat rate

Volunteers should not be paid a flat rate because:

- any money given to a volunteer over and above out-of-pocket expenses is regarded as income by HMRC and would render the entire payment liable for tax, not just the portion above the actual expense
- it could affect payments if the volunteer is in receipt of state or other benefits
- it could be regarded by an employment tribunal or similar body as contributing to the formation of a contract between the volunteer and the organisation, leading to a volunteer being granted the same rights as employees, including the national minimum wage

It should be noted that there have been cases in which HMRC has decided that flat-rate payments are earnings and has demanded several years' tax be paid on them.

More information

You can find more information in the [expenses and state benefits section of Volunteering England's Good Practice Bank](#).¹⁷

¹⁵ <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/individuals/giving/gift-aid.htm>

¹⁶ http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/gift_aid/rules/vol-expenses.htm#1

¹⁷ <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/expenses>

8. Health and safety

The legal obligations of organisations towards their volunteers with regard to health and safety are less clear than they are for employees. Nevertheless, organisations do have legal obligations towards their volunteers, and it is good practice to treat volunteers with equal consideration when it comes to health and safety (duty of care).

The duty of care

Generally, a duty of care arises where one individual or group undertakes an activity which could reasonably harm another, either physically, mentally or economically. A duty of care can arise in ways that may not always be obvious, for example:

- loaning equipment to others
- charity walks and sponsored runs
- running fêtes or fairs
- organising day trips
- selling food at a charity stall

Basic principles

Committing to good health and safety practice

We strongly recommend that, as far as possible, all organisations meet the same health and safety requirements for volunteers as are demanded by law for paid employees. If an organisation has no employees, it may not be able to achieve the same standards of health and safety as are required for employees. However, by aiming to accomplish this, the organisation will demonstrate to its volunteers and the outside world the value it places on them and their efforts.

Health and safety policy

A health and safety policy is the foundation on which to develop procedures and practices. It also announces the organisation's commitment towards good health and safety standards.

Organisations with fewer than five employees are not obliged to have a written policy, but are strongly advised to do so. If an organisation involves volunteers, they should always be included in the health and safety policy as a matter of good practice. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website has [examples of model health and safety policies and a template](http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/write.htm)¹⁸ that can be used for creating your own policies.

¹⁸ <http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/write.htm>

Health, safety and welfare

All employers must provide a safe place to work which is clean and free from risks, to reduce the risk of ill health or injury; organisations without employees should aim to do the same. A safe system of working is required, such as having proper procedures for handling dangerous substances; there should be adequate supervision and training; and information should be provided.

Risk assessment

Risk assessment is a technique for identifying and mitigating potential hazards involved with any activity. Risk is assessed by identifying a hazard and assessing the degree of harm it could cause against the likelihood of it occurring. The assessment then indicates what measures need to be put in place, if any, to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Employers should ensure their risk assessment always involves employees and volunteers who are involved in the activities that are being risk assessed, and organisations without employees should aim to do the same. All key arts events or activities should be risk assessed, with brokers being aware of any key major activity in which volunteers will be involved.



For more information, including templates, visit [the HSE website](#).¹⁹

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

The [COSHH regulations](#)²⁰ require employers to control substances that can harm workers' health. All employers have a legal duty to assess the workplace for risks to health which may be caused by substances hazardous to health. They must take all necessary steps to control any risks identified. Organisations without employees should aim to do the same.

Fire safety and risk assessment

All public and community buildings, whether owned or operated by an employer or an organisation without employees, must meet minimum levels of standards so that the risk of fire is reduced. The [local fire brigade](#)²¹ should be consulted for advice.

¹⁹ <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/assessment.htm>

²⁰ <http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/>

²¹ http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Dio11/DoltOnline/DG_10027464

Registering your organisation's activities

All employers must register their existence with the HSE or the environmental health department in the local authority.²² Organisations without employees only have to register if they take part in certain activities. An organisation should always check with the authorities if they are in any doubt about the need for registering activities.

First aid

All employers have a legal duty to make a first aid assessment. The need for first aid will depend on the organisation's activities. For instance, a museum will have very different needs from a small knitting group. Organisations without employees are not bound to conduct a first aid assessment, although it is clearly good practice to do so. It can also be useful to have at least one first aid trained volunteer.

In certain circumstances there may be a legal duty to provide first aid facilities. For example, if an organisation holds a major arts exhibition without first aid facilities and someone is injured, they may have broken their duty of care. An organisation should always check with the authorities if they are in any doubt about the need for registering activities.

More information is available from the HSE.²³

Accidents and ill health

Under health and safety law, employers must report and keep a record of certain injuries, incidents and cases of work-related disease.

There is no legal requirement to record every accident, only those that meet the definition of 'serious'. However, keeping records will help you to identify patterns of accidents and injuries, and will help when completing your risk assessment. Your insurance company may also want to see your records if there is a work-related claim.

Information about what needs to be reported and how is available on the HSE website.²⁴

²² <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/D11/Directories/Localcouncils/index.htm>

²³ <http://www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid/>

²⁴ <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/what-must-i-report.htm>

Case study: DaDaFest

DaDaFest is a Disability and Deaf organisation based in Liverpool which delivers a biennial festival, youth arts and a year-round programme of activity. It celebrates the best in Disability and Deaf Arts, presenting art from a unique cultural perspective. DaDaFest involves both short-term and part-time volunteers in a variety of roles, offering practical experience in the delivery of an international arts and cultural festival. DaDaFest offer new and existing volunteers a wide range of support, training and opportunities to learn new skills as well as Arts Award Accreditation.

Volunteer roles include reporters, researchers, ambassadors, exhibition invigilators, tour guides and technicians. Volunteers are important members of the DaDaFest team. Steph, for example, joins the team every Friday afternoon, answering the telephone and greeting visitors. She has been involved with the organisation since 2005. Her role during the festival is varied, involving supporting visiting artists and undertaking unexpected tasks such as looking after assistance dogs.

9. Insurance

All groups and organisations that involve volunteers should consider what types of insurance they need to put in place to cover them for that involvement. Due to the variation between insurers and policies, listed below is general advice only. All groups and organisations needing specialist advice should always consult their insurance brokers for more detailed information.

When purchasing insurance, a group or organisation involving volunteers should:

- ensure that the policies explicitly mention volunteers and covers them
- check if there are upper and lower age limits for volunteers
- ensure that the policies cover the types of activities that volunteers will be doing
- conduct a risk assessment for each of the roles that volunteers will be performing, which will help your insurer to tailor your policy to suit your needs

Employer's liability insurance

By law, employers must have employer's liability insurance. It covers paid employees in the event of accident, disease or injury caused or made worse as a result of work or of the employer's negligence.

This insurance does not automatically cover volunteers. There is no obligation to extend the policy to cover volunteers, but it is good practice to do so. The policy must explicitly mention volunteers if they are to be covered by it.

Public liability insurance

Also known as third party insurance, this protects the organisation for claims by members of the public for death, illness, loss, injury, or accident caused by the negligence of the organisation. A group or organisation should therefore consider having it in place if its activities could affect members of the public in this way.

Public liability insurance generally covers anybody other than employees who come into contact with the organisation. This should explicitly include volunteers, covering them against loss or injury caused by negligence of the organisation if they are not covered by employer's liability insurance.

It also protects for loss or damage to property caused through the negligence of someone acting with the authority of the organisation, which would include the actions of volunteers. Public liability cover should therefore clearly cover loss or injury caused by volunteers. In some cases a volunteer could be sued as an individual for damage caused to a third party, so the organisation's public liability insurance should indemnify them against this.

Insurance for volunteer drivers

If an organisation owns the vehicle being used, then it is responsible for arranging insurance. If the volunteer owns the vehicle, then they are responsible for arranging insurance and informing the insurer about their volunteer driving.

If a driver has an accident during their volunteering and there is a problem with the insurance for that vehicle, the organisation could be held responsible, whether or not it owns the vehicle involved. The organisation can take out a contingent liability policy to protect it from this risk. It may be necessary to brief volunteers on what they should and shouldn't do when using their own car for their volunteering – so they are fully aware of what they are committing themselves to and they can enhance their own car insurance policy if necessary.

Tyne & Wear Museums

Tyne and Wear Museums is a regional service running 11 museums and galleries in the Tyne and Wear area of North East England. The network is very flexible in terms of what it can offer the potential volunteer, including short and long-term or full and part-time volunteer roles. Activities can include archiving, stewarding, welcoming visitors, and even being part of an exhibition. Volunteers allow the organisation to do things it would not otherwise be able to do. TAWM also recognises that participation promotes user-involvement, gets the community involved with the museums and allows people to gain experience for paid work. In 2010/11, more than 2,000 volunteers contributed their time to the North East's museums and galleries. This adds up to an astounding 80,000 hours.

10. Monitoring and evaluating a volunteer programme

There are many reasons to monitor and evaluate your volunteer programme, but they may include:

- ensuring your volunteers have a positive experience
- identifying areas for improvement
- providing information to funders
- assessing the programmes impact

What is monitoring?

Monitoring is the process of collecting information so that programmes can be reviewed and updated as necessary. Information for monitoring can be collected daily, monthly or quarterly.

Case study – Up for Arts

Up for Arts is a social action radio project that promotes active participation within the voluntary arts and crafts sector. It is a collaboration between BBC Radio Merseyside and Voluntary Arts England. The project is embedded within BBC Radio Merseyside and so benefits from free radio time, use of the A team helpline and access to BBC Radio Merseyside's Performance Space. The helpline is staffed by a 15-strong team of volunteers who take listeners' calls, deal with enquiries, provide referral support and act as arts ambassadors for the project. The volunteers monitor listeners' calls, track listeners' interests in arts activities and gather evidence and feedback at arts events. The project has worked with over 9,000 people over a course of a year, 60–70% of whom were inspired to join an arts group or start up their own.

What is evaluation?

Evaluation involves analysing the information you have collected to answer questions about how well the programme is doing, and to identify any gaps and improvements you can make. This will usually be done every six months or annually.

Evaluation literature often refers to 'inputs', 'outputs', 'outcomes' and 'impact':

- inputs are the resources used to operate a programme – e.g. time, money, materials
- outputs are the products and services the programme leads to – e.g. training for volunteers, shows, one-to-one support for isolated people
- outcomes are the changes that the programme leads to – e.g. enabling people to develop new skills, a reduction in social isolation
- impact is the broader or longer term effects of the programme – e.g. improved mental health, and improved community cohesion

Deciding what to monitor

What you monitor will depend on the aims and objectives of your programme. For example, if you involve volunteers in order to increase audience or visitor numbers, you will probably want to monitor volunteer numbers, volunteer hours and visitor numbers.

Some outputs you may wish to monitor are:

- the diversity of volunteers in terms of age, ethnicity, sex, socioeconomic background, etc
- the number of volunteers recruited by different methods
- how long volunteers stay with you
- the tasks undertaken by volunteers



Some outcomes you may wish to monitor are:

- the change in the number of people – such as audiences, visitors and participants – engaging with your activity
- the diversity of the people engaging with your activity
- the quality of the volunteer experience
- skills and experiences gained by volunteers
- satisfaction with your activity
- the change in the level of funding to your organisation

Monitoring and evaluation

- use language that will be helpful
- be clear about the target group you will be working with
- be specific about what you are doing and who will benefit as a direct result
- clarify the geographical area you are working in
- make sure everyone in the project is clear about the project's aims
- establish clear systems for gathering and collecting information
- develop a wide range of collaborators, stakeholders and partners
- reflect on how good people feel (soft outcomes)
- who's contributing what?
- how did we meet our targets?
- identify any key success areas or weakness/pitfalls
- how much did it all cost? Did we come in on budget?
- time to share: consider how you might share best practice

Gathering information

Different information is gathered in different ways. Some data will be quantitative (facts and figures) and some will be qualitative (opinions, comments, etc). Outputs will generally be quantitative, but outcomes may be either. For example, an increase in the number of participants is a quantitative outcome of your volunteer programme, and satisfaction with your activity is a qualitative outcome.

Ways of collecting this data include:

- volunteer application forms
- feedback forms
- questionnaires
- focus groups
- one-to-one meetings
- vox pops (short interviews)
- attendance records
- case studies
- photographs
- anecdotal comments

Evaluation

Once you have collected the relevant information, you need to analyse it and draw conclusions. Again, the type of analysis and interpretation will depend on the aims and objectives of your programme.

Analysis

Quantitative data will usually be evaluated statistically, for example:

- the percentage increase in volunteers, audiences, participants, etc
- relative numbers of people engaged from different backgrounds, e.g. age, sex, ethnicity, socioeconomic background
- average length of time a volunteer stays with you
- increase in funding per volunteer involved
- types of volunteering (formal, informal, episodic, casual)

Qualitative data will often be evaluated by writing a report about what people have said about your programme.

Drawing conclusions

Once you have analysed your data, you can draw conclusions about such things as:

- the effectiveness of your recruitment methods
- how involving volunteers affects audience numbers, funding, etc
- what parts of your programme you should keep and what needs to change
- what information you need to gather that you don't already gather

Demonstrating impact

The impact of your programme is the broader or longer-term effects it has on, for example, the community, volunteers or the organisation. If you have collected data, analysed it and drawn conclusions, you are well on the way to demonstrating the impact of your programme.

What you need to think about is how you use the information you have gathered and the conclusions you have drawn. This will depend on who you want to demonstrate your impact to and why. For example, you may want to:

- show a funder that you have met their expectations
- gain new funding
- increase community involvement in and support for your organisation
- establish relationships and partnerships with other organisations
- have an effect on local or national policy
- demonstrate outcomes and achievements

It is therefore a matter of how you draw your conclusions and the method of presentation. Usually a report is produced which is then sent to the audiences that have been identified, presented at meetings and events, promoted via the press, etc.

More information

You can find more information in the [resources for volunteer managers and coordinators section of Volunteering England's Good Practice Bank](#).²⁵

Volunteering England produces a number of [publications](#)²⁶ that you may find useful. In particular, the [Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit \(VIAT\)](#)²⁷ contains step-by-step instructions on how to conduct an assessment. It is backed up by a suite of web-based tools such as questionnaires, guides for interviews, focus groups and other methods of collecting information. It also includes detailed guidance on conducting a Volunteer Investment and Value Audit, a measurement tool that assesses the value of volunteers' time in relation to the resources used to support them.

²⁵

<http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/goodpracticebank/Core+Themes/Volunteer+Managers+and+Coordinators/index>

²⁶ <https://ecommerce.volunteering.org.uk/>

²⁷ <https://ecommerce.volunteering.org.uk/PublicationDetails.aspx?ProductID=V311>

Case study: The Castle Players

The Castle Players is a not-for-profit community theatre company and a registered charity. They are based in Barnard Castle and perform open-air Shakespeare comedies in summer and tour Teesdale villages with indoor winter productions. Apart from the director, all the company are volunteers – 80 in total. They also have a thriving youth sector. Though amateur, they run the organisation along professional lines and provide training to members, where and when possible. Local voluntary and community organisations provide a wide range of appropriate project management advice and guidance and help with the recruitment of volunteers.

11. Job substitution

As the impact of public spending cuts becomes clear, an increasing number of organisations are concerned about the legality of replacing positions that have been made redundant with volunteers.

Is the role suitable for a volunteer?

The first question to ask is whether or not the roles in question are suitable for volunteers in the first place. Volunteers are usually involved because they bring something additional to the role that paid staff cannot. Volunteers are not core to the organisation or the group but complementary.

One of the principles of Volunteering England's [charter with the TUC for strengthening relations between paid staff and volunteers](#) is that the involvement of volunteers should provide added value and supplement the work of paid staff. They should not be used to displace paid staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service.

Also, unless volunteers are involved appropriately, the situation could have a negative impact on the image of volunteering in the area. This is particularly important given that the role of volunteers in delivering public services is currently high on the political agenda.

Legal issues

There are also some legal considerations, especially if a volunteer is in receipt of state benefits. Jobcentre Plus and HM Revenue and Customs can investigate instances of suspected 'notional earnings'. If the claimant performs a service for someone and either isn't paid or is paid less than for comparable employment in the area, their benefits claim could be affected. For more information, see the [Directgov web page about volunteering while on benefits](#).

Also, there have been cases in which volunteers have been found by an employment tribunal to be, in effect, an employee or worker. This has conferred on them employment rights such as the national minimum wage. For more information, see Volunteering England's [free publication 'Volunteers and the law'](#).

Displacement or replacement?

In the current climate, however, it is not always easy to decide whether or not the involvement of volunteers constitutes the displacement of paid staff. For example, if a local library or museum is going to close unless volunteers take on the running of it, is that displacement?

As the effect of cuts in funding for public services and the voluntary sector is still going on, no single answer has yet to emerge. However, it is clear that choosing to make staff redundant and directly replace them with volunteers does constitute job substitution.

12. Volunteers and copyright

In law there is a presumption that any copyright created by an employee in the course of their employment will be owned by the employer, unless the employee and employer have agreed otherwise. This is a very important principle given the creative nature of the work.

However, if a volunteer produces an original work in the course of their volunteering then they own the copyright to that work, even if it is created specifically for an organisation. This means that the work cannot be reproduced or changed without their permission.

Therefore, if a volunteer is taking photographs, designing materials or promotional resources, or creating artwork for your organisation, it may be sensible to take steps to ensure that your group will be able to use these works in the long term without worrying about copyright. This is easily done by producing an appropriate contract delineating the relationship between both the group/volunteer and how work developed can be used in the future.

Case study – Globe Gallery: Newcastle-Upon-Tyne

Globe Gallery is a contemporary arts organisation with artists and the community at its heart. The organisation's base is a disused bank in Newcastle city centre. The site is an ideal location to facilitate effective new ways to link exhibition and participation, artists with audiences and volunteers of all ages. All volunteer opportunities focus on contemporary arts as a means of stimulating social awareness, creativity and encouraging people's professional or personal development. The organisation aims to help people learn and develop and offers a wide range of volunteering opportunities, including creative support and training.

Are there any exceptions to copyright?

There are a few exceptions where you are able to reproduce copyrighted work without permission, but the only ones that are likely to apply are if it is for use:

- by a disabled person who can't access it in its original format
- in teaching

However, if you are copying large amounts of material and/or making multiple copies then you may still need permission. It is also generally necessary to include an acknowledgement.

For further information about exceptions, visit the [Intellectual Property Office website](#).

Other rights

Apart from copyright, volunteers will have:

- the economic right to make money from their work (see above for ideas about what that might be)
- the moral rights to:
 - be identified as the author (or director) of the work
 - object to derogatory treatment of their work

While economic rights are generally agreed when copyright is assigned or licensed, moral rights will remain with the creator of the work unless they too are explicitly waived.

Gaining permission to use works created by volunteers

There are two main ways in which you can gain permission to use works created by volunteers: assignation and licensing.

Assignation

Individuals can 'assign' copyright, which means transferring full or partial ownership of the copyright to an individual or an organisation. Volunteers can assign copyright to the organisations for which they are producing original work, e.g. logos, leaflets, drawings, etc. We suggest that you ask the volunteer to sign a statement to the effect that:

- control of copyright is being given to the organisation
- control of copyright is being given in exchange for a small sum of money
- exchange of money relates to control of copyright for material produced, rather than for hours of work done
- the work may be used/replicated/reproduced in all possible scenarios

The following statement can be used for this purpose. However, when you use or adapt it please bear in mind that it has not been checked by a solicitor.

I, (volunteer name), agree to assign copyright on the work I produce to (organisation name) in return for the sum of (e.g. 50 pence).

I understand that this means the organisation has control of copyright for material/work I produce, in a similar way to the control it has over material/work produced by a paid employee.

I understand that this sum is payment for copyright on material(s) I produce or have produced and is not a payment for work.

Licensing

Individuals can license their work, retaining their copyright but allowing an individual or an organisation to use it within the terms of the licence. You may want to seek legal advice in drawing up an appropriate agreement to use with volunteers. Areas the agreement should cover include the:

- parties involved
- work the licence covers
- terms of the licence, i.e. how the work can be used
- duration of the licence

Alternatively, there are organisations that provide licences. For example, [Creative Commons](#) licences provide simple, standardised alternatives to the 'all rights reserved' paradigm of traditional copyright.

Further information

- [Intellectual Property Office | About copyright](#)²⁸
- [Intellectual Property Office | Copyright: Essential Reading](#)²⁹
- [The UK Copyright Service](#)³⁰

²⁸ <http://www.ipo.gov.uk/types/copy/c-about.htm>

²⁹ <http://www.ipo.gov.uk/c-essential.pdf>

³⁰ <http://www.copyrightservice.co.uk/>

13. Employer supported volunteering

Employer supported volunteering (ESV) is the term for any volunteering carried out by employees with the support of their employer, usually during working hours.

Benefits

Benefits to employees include developing new interests or skills and supporting local projects.

Benefits to businesses include a motivated and socially engaged workforce, and the good publicity of having helped their community.

Benefits to the voluntary and community sector organisation include extra pairs of hands to help out with whatever tasks need doing and the specific skills of the employees.

Information for volunteers

The employer and the beneficiary organisation should work together prior to the project to ensure that the volunteers have all the information they require for a positive experience. This includes, but will not be limited to:

- dates and times
- location
- activities
- expenses arrangements
- clothing requirements

Activities

ESV often works best when you have a specific project in mind, such as creating the scenery for a community play or stewarding at a local festival. A project with a set completion date will provide the volunteers with a sense of achievement. It may also make a better story for the local media.

You can approach businesses that will provide you with specific skills. For example, you could ask an interior design agency to help you refurbish your venue or an IT firm to set up a video-diary booth to collect case studies of your participants for YouTube.

In all cases, you may want to consider a written role description, which you can discuss with volunteers prior to, and during, an induction. As with all volunteers, ensure they are adequately supervised and have the opportunity to provide feedback.

Expenses

It is good practice to ensure that someone is not out of pocket as a result of their volunteering. Usually, expenses such as travel and lunch costs would be met by the volunteer-involving organisation. However, the situation may not be as straightforward with an ESV scheme. For example, the volunteers may be being paid their usual salary for that day, in which case they would not be out of pocket if they were usually expected to pay for their own travel and food.

In all cases, the employer and the volunteer-involving organisation should discuss and decide the issue of expenses and other costs before the activity takes place.

Insurance

When a member of the public makes a claim of liability for death, illness, loss, injury, or accident, it will generally be against the organisation carrying out the activity that led to it. Therefore, employer supported volunteers would be covered by the insurance of the organisation in which they are volunteering.

However, this doesn't mean that a claim could not be brought against the employer, either by a member of the public or one of their employee volunteers. Therefore, both organisations should seek advice to ensure they are covered. They should also consider whether specific cover is required for the activity, for example if the volunteers are using heavy machinery or driving.

Publicity

If good publicity is one of the reasons the business has agreed to help you – and it often is – make sure you bear this in mind from the beginning. What kind of stories do your local newspapers and radio stations like to run? Do you have a good relationship with editors and reporters?

Be careful not to promise publicity to a business if you're not sure you can deliver it. It's also better to word agreements in terms of what you will do rather than what you expect other people to do. For example, you could agree to 'send a press release to local media followed by a phone call', rather than to 'secure publicity in the local press'.

More information

You can find more information on [Volunteering England's ESV web pages for volunteer involving organisations](#).

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Voluntary Arts England acts as a bridge between two sectors - the arts, and the voluntary and community sector. We offer a wide range of services including:

- Advice and information to help voluntary arts groups develop and connect with their communities
- Lobbying and advocacy to raise the profile of the sector
- Volunteer development to build capacity
- Participation campaigns to involve more people in the arts

We work with arts organisations, government, funders, national umbrella bodies, local authorities, media organisations and other key partners.

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