

# Best Practice Resources for Volunteer Recruitment & Management

## Writing a Volunteer Role Description

Be clear about what the role involves, what you want volunteers to achieve, and how their contribution makes a difference. When expectations are clear, people can decide if the role is right for them.

Remember, **your role description is your first line of defence** - it attracts the right people and helps filter out those who aren't a good fit.

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### A volunteer role description should include:

- Name of your organisation and/or project.
- Title of the volunteering role - try to make it engaging and relevant to the role.
- Why you are needed? What impact will your volunteering make? Show how volunteering supports the impact of the project.
- What will you be doing? Outline the typical tasks and responsibilities. What does a volunteering session look like? Will they work on their own or as part of a team?
- What's in it for you? Benefits could include:
  - meeting new people, making friends, joining a friendly team etc;
  - training and experience for skills based roles, esp where volunteering can support a chosen career path;
  - making an impact on your service users - why not include a quote from one of your current volunteers, or a service user?;
  - Expenses policy and ongoing support
- What skills, experience and attributes will you need? Include "soft" as well as "hard" skills. Examples include:
  - good verbal and written communication skills
  - ability to understand instructions and work independently
  - a good listener
  - able to work independently
  - You should be physically fit and able to bend, lift and kneel.
  - specific qualifications and/or professional accreditations e.g. for counselling, any minimum level of qualification

It is also fine to just say that you are not looking for any specific skills, knowledge or experience, just passion and enthusiasm!

- What induction, training and support will you receive?
- Where will the volunteering take place?
- What is the time commitment? Do you need volunteers to regularly commit, at specific times or days of the week? How many hours a week/month? Do you want volunteers to commit to a length of time? How flexible is the role?



*Volunteers cannot be bound by an employment contract but you can ask them to sign a Volunteer Agreement. Take a look at our "Volunteer Agreement template" resource.*

- Other key information to include:

**Age range** - specify the minimum and/or maximum age range for this role



*Your safeguarding policy and risk assessment for this role should determine this. You need to check with your insurance providers what age range they will cover.*

**DBS** - if any level of DBS check is required for this role, include this information and make it clear that there is no cost to the volunteer.



*You need to decide whether your role is eligible for a DBS check. Take a look at our resources on safeguarding and vetting.*

**Driving license** - if this role involves driving, either in vehicles you provide or in their own vehicle, make it clear what you require and how this affects insurance.



*Drivers using their own vehicles in their voluntary activities should tell their insurers. There shouldn't be higher premiums for this, as volunteering should be regarded as part of the 'social, domestic and pleasure' use of the vehicle.*

- You could include any statement or policy you have about inclusive volunteering, with an indication of what support you might be able to provide for people with additional support needs.

It's helpful to the volunteer to understand how they can apply for the role and what will happen after their application is submitted. Who can they get in touch with if they still have questions?

**If you would like help with improving your role descriptions, please get in touch with Jo Dawson, Volunteering Officer at [jodawson@vcsutton.org.uk](mailto:jodawson@vcsutton.org.uk).**