

Introduction

Your volunteering opportunity will be advertised on the Volunteer Dundee and Volunteer Scotland websites as well as in our browsers in our Offices. When completing this form it's worth remembering that this is a chance to "sell" your organisation to prospective volunteers, so keep your content interesting, easy to understand and to the point. It may take around fifteen – twenty minutes to complete the form, but it could attract people who will give hundreds of hours to your organisation so it could be time well spent.

Before recruiting volunteers, your organisation needs to have a clear understanding of what tasks they are to do. Organisations that can offer interesting and productive tasks will find it easier to attract and keep volunteers. Different people will, of course, find different tasks interesting but the design of the volunteer opportunity is important.

Completing the Form

Question 1

First of all, you need a title to describe the opportunity. There's no need to have "volunteer" in the title – simply say befriender, driver, adviser, web designer, treasurer, etc.

Questions 2 and 3

We want to be sure we're linking your opportunity to the correct organisation and getting potential volunteers to contact the right person in that organisation.

Question 4

This is used when people search on our website for an opportunity. Enter the postcode of your organisation. If the volunteering takes place elsewhere, add the details under Question 9.

Question 5

Give details of when the opportunity starts, if there is an end date or is it ongoing.

Question 6

Saltire Awards are for young people aged 12 to 25, a great way to recognise your young volunteers' contribution. For further information, see our website or email saltireawards@number10.org. There's lots of demand for volunteering roles from under 16s in Dundee. You might not feel able to take on a young volunteer of that age but have you considered buddying them up with an older volunteer? We can clear up some of the myths around insurance and PVGs, just contact our Youth Volunteering Development Worker.

Question 7

The Short Opportunity Summary will be the first thing a potential volunteer looking online will read about your opportunity, so think carefully about how to grab their attention. Focus on the need to be met, on the intended result. Sum this up in no more than 35 words.

For example, avoid – Receptionist wanted to answer phones, take messages and room bookings. An alternative approach would be "People coming to the Mental Health Centre are often embarrassed, confused and uneasy. We need a receptionist to welcome people and make them feel as comfortable as possible".

Other examples are:-

- Adult Literacy Tutor** - Many people from all walks of life are unable to take advantage of the full benefits of our society because they are unable to read or write. Would you like to help change this?
- Girl Guide Leader** - Many girls grow up without the self-confidence and other skills to become competent, successful adults. Guide Leaders can help change this – could you be one?
- Clothes Sorter** - Help to raise money to combat disease and poverty in underdeveloped countries by sorting out donated clothes for our charity shop.
- Driver** - Some senior citizens live with little or no contact with other people. We need you to pick them up in a minibus and bring them to our Centre for companionship, care and attention.
- Teller/Cashier** - People on low incomes often fall into very high interest loans or worse still loan sharks. Our Credit Union gives them an alternative and we need tellers/cashiers to staff our office.

Question 8

Next, think about a longer message about the opportunity. You have up to 150 words to describe what a volunteer would do, the potential benefits for the volunteer and the potential benefits to the end user, be it a person or the environment. You don't need to include information about training or support, as these topics are dealt with further on.

Example

“Positive Steps is accepting applications from people to join a team of Literacy Tutors who enable adults, free of charge, to improve their reading and writing.

Tutors can make a significant difference to peoples' reading/writing skills levels and past Tutors say it has helped them meet new people, make new friends, feel part of a group. They also report a high feel good factor when adults make good progress.

Past adult learners have said the following “It's great – I can now help my kids with their homework” and “I've got the bug for learning and I hope to go to college soon” and “At last I don't need to pretend that I can read the newspaper!”

Tutors work with individuals or small groups of up to three and take them through a structured learning programme.”

Some examples of what motivates people to volunteer are given below. You might want to use some of them in your answer to Question 8. Quotes from existing volunteers and users can be very powerful as well.

- * try out a new career
- * to feel useful
- * do something different
- * learn a new skill/rebuild an old one
- * improve community life
- * to enjoy spare time

Question 9

Where does the volunteering take place? An example would be “Tutoring takes place in the Positive Steps Centre, 26 High St, Anytown. It is close to the train and bus stations. Bus nos. 10 and 16.” Or “Activities can take place in any of our sheltered housing complexes across Dundee. We’ll try and match you with a complex near to you.”

Question 10

The Volunteer Friendly Award (VF) is a quality standard designed by Volunteer Dundee to support groups to look at their volunteer management practices and to identify what they do well, recognise what they would like to improve, develop an action plan to progress the changes and develop a framework for managing volunteers. If your organisation already has the Award, it makes you more attractive to potential volunteers. If you don’t already have the Award but are interested to learn more, check out our website (www.volunteerfriendly.org.uk) or contact our Volunteer Friendly Development Workers.

Question 11

Tick **one** box only. For example, an Adult Literary Tutor opportunity would tick the “Tutoring/Support Learners” box. A Girl Guide Leader opportunity would tick “Youth Work”. This is how your opportunity will be categorised on Volunteer Centre Dundee’s website and in our browsers in the Office.

Question 12

Again select **one** box only. An Adult Literacy Tutor opportunity would tick the “Education/Literacy” box. This will also be used to categorise your opportunity on the Volunteer Centre Dundee’s website and in our browsers in our Office.

Question 13

There’s lots of demand for volunteering roles from under 16s in Dundee. You might not feel able to take on a young volunteer of that age but have you considered buddying them up with an older volunteer? We can clear up some of the myths around insurance and PVGs, just contact our Youth Volunteering Development Worker.

Question 14

If there are specific restrictions please say why. Care needs to be taken that people are not being discriminated against because of their age or gender.

Question 15

Don’t just assume that potential volunteers will know what skills are needed from reading the opportunity description. For example, “The ability to read and write are essential tutor skills. Adults learn more when tutors are supportive, offer encouragement and are focused on the task.”

Question 16

We realise it is difficult to give a precise answer to this question, but it would be useful for us to have a rough idea on how many volunteers you feel you need for the particular volunteer opportunity.

Question 17

Is there a minimum time commitment you expect from a volunteer – this could be 2 months, 6 months or 1 year. Do you need a regular commitment of say two hours per day; one hour per month, etc.

Question 18

Please tick the times when you want the volunteering opportunity to be taking place. It could be covered by a number of different volunteers.

Question 19

It is important that volunteers are covered by the appropriate insurance when carrying out their roles. You'll need to check with your insurer that your volunteers are covered by your employer's liability and public liability insurance. In some cases, they might also need to be covered by professional indemnity insurance.

Question 20

Taster sessions are attractive to volunteers. They give potential volunteers an opportunity to see where they would be volunteering, who they would be volunteering with, and try out the tasks they will be required to do. They also give you the opportunity to find out if a person has a positive contribution to make to your organisation before either party commits to a longer term volunteering agreement.

A taster session should be offered before any standard selection or vetting procedures take place, and may involve more than one potential volunteer coming along to try it out together or as part of an established group. You will, however, still have to adhere to any basic health & safety procedures and insurance clauses, for example, that you have an obligation to meet. (For example, a large national voluntary organisation in the past that recruited volunteers required them to complete membership applications to ensure they were covered by the correct insurance). Tasters that involve potential volunteers coming into contact with children and vulnerable adults may still be suitable depending upon your organisation's Child Protection Policy and Procedures and that you ensure that the volunteer is supervised at all times. For example coming along to observe what happens at a youth group or shadowing one of the workers/ experienced volunteers is perfectly legitimate.

Other ways you can give potential volunteers a taste of what they will be undertaking is through video material, and/or initial information sessions where existing volunteers can talk in more detail about what's involved.

Question 22

For example "After an introduction to our organisation and to the volunteering role, we'll buddy you with an experienced volunteer until you feel comfortable in the role. Monthly support meetings with the volunteer co-ordinator."

Question 24

For example "Positive Steps repays tutor travel expenses, public transport or car (current mileage rate = 40p), every week."

Question 26

It's helpful to know how you would like to be contacted in the first instance.

Questions 27 and 28

This is about managing a potential volunteer's expectations. Many think that they will be able to start immediately, so it's helpful for them to know in advance that the process may take several weeks, if not months. A prompt response to their first enquiry is appreciated. It's also encouraging for them if you keep in touch if there is a delay in being able to get them started, for example, while waiting for PVG checks.

Dundee Third Sector Interface (TSI) is a partnership between Dundee Social Enterprise Network, Dundee Voluntary Action and Volunteer Dundee.

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