



# Volunteer Toronto

## Intermediate

# Volunteer Recruitment

## Resource Guide & Workbook

Compiled by the Engaging Organizations Department

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# **Using this Resource Guide & Workbook**

The Volunteer Recruitment resource guide & workbook has been compiled by Volunteer Toronto to help community groups, non-profits and charitable organizations with the basic tools to effectively maintain and value their volunteers.

Each resource has been selected to give you an idea of the straightforward needs of each step of the process. It is important to remember that these are guidelines informed by best practices; you can adapt them to your situation as needed.

## **Volunteer Recruitment**

It's time to recruit volunteers for your organization. Perhaps you're starting a new volunteer program or you're looking to expand your volunteer base. You've already planned for volunteer involvement, so now it is time to begin **Volunteer Recruitment**.

This workbook continues on the process of planning for volunteer involvement by designing and creating volunteer position descriptions for recruitment purposes. Additionally, there are a number of specialized recruitment guides for recruiting everyone from youth to seniors. There are two main sections for this workbook:

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## Planning the Recruitment Campaign

A well-planned recruitment campaign is essential if you want to find volunteers who are the right fit for your program and your volunteer position. Next time you need to recruit volunteers, ask yourself these questions to help you decide who, how, and where to recruit:

**1. Who could do this job?**

*Remember diversity (age, gender, ethnicity, ability).*

**2. What does our “ideal” volunteer look like for this position?**

*Keep an open mind; focus on skills, knowledge and attitudes.*

**3. What kinds of skills and characteristics are required?**

*Use task descriptions to help you stay on track.*

**4. What kinds of people have those types of skills and characteristics?**

**5. Where are those people? What do they read and watch? Where do they go?**

*Think targeted and general. Remember to consider “real” places and “virtual places” such as websites, Facebook, blogs, corporations, and associations.*

**6. What will they need back from the involvement and can we provide that?**

*What motivates these people? How can you engage them and retain them?*

**7. What publicity vehicles are most likely to reach them?**

*Print, electronic, speaking engagements, fairs, kiosks, etc.*

**8. What message would motivate them to volunteer for our initiative?**

**9. Are we ready to welcome them to our agency?**

Adapted from: Best of All: The Quick Reference Guide to Effective Volunteer involvement by Linda Graff.  
Published by: Linda Graff and Associates Inc. 2005 - [www.lindagraff.ca](http://www.lindagraff.ca)

### Volunteer Recruitment Checklist

Before you start the recruitment process, there are certain things that your organization can do to make sure that you're prepared for volunteer involvement. Is your organization ready to recruit?

		Yes/No
1	Our organization has developed policies on volunteer involvement, which are known to staff and volunteers.	
2	We have assessed the risk associated with the volunteer position and determined which screening measures to use.	
3	We have a written position description that is realistic and clear about the position requirements and responsibilities.	
4	We have established a process to select volunteers (e.g., application form, interview, reference checks).	
5	We have a designated person who will supervise volunteers.	
6	We have determined how volunteers will receive orientation and training.	
7	We have developed forms to manage volunteer involvement (e.g., confidentiality agreement, registration form).	
8	We have decided how we will evaluate the volunteer program, and which indicators we will use to assess success.	

### BEING READY FOR CHANGE

Even if you have been recruiting volunteers for a long time, always take time to reflect and reconsider your process and plans as volunteers themselves change. 10 years ago, social media was not an effective recruitment tool and mandatory 40 hours of volunteer service for high schoolers was only implemented in 1999. Always keep up to date on changes in the voluntary sector.



## Job Design Theory

For Organizations	<p>Job design focuses on supporting the organization's mandate and identifies what actually needs to get done. Job design also provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an analysis of functions to support risk management</li> <li>• the basis for determining the screening steps</li> <li>• defined expectations to guide performance review</li> </ul>
For Volunteers	<p>Job design creates the flexibility to group or re-group tasks to meet the needs and interests of the volunteer. Job design also gives the volunteer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a clear definition of what to do and what is expected</li> <li>• guidelines for role limitations and boundaries</li> <li>• a role focused on mandate, so that volunteers know that what they do matters and will make a difference</li> </ul>



### APPLYING JOB DESIGN

Volunteers can use position descriptions as their go-to instructions during their engagement. By using job design theory and job analysis to craft an excellent and thorough position description, volunteers can always have a reminder of how the work they do supports your organization and your cause.

### Job design is an analytic approach to hiring

1. Identify the work
2. Then identify the skills
3. Then identify who has or wants to acquire the skills

### A well-designed job will help the volunteer understand

- The rationale for their assignment
- How their tasks contribute to the overall organization
- Who to turn to for assistance or to report on task progress

Job analysis allows you to determine the functions, components and tasks to reach your goal.

### Five Steps of Job Design

#### 1. Review your mandate to give direction for the job design.

- Your mandate is the fundamental reason for the existence of your organization.
- A good mission statement explains your mandate in terms that everyone can understand and identify with.
- Job design based on the organization's goals can truly identify what will contribute to achieving those goals.

#### 2. What are the functions that support your mandate? Identify the functions, components and tasks that will lead to what your organization wants to achieve.

- **Functions:** what does your organization do? *Collect food, raise funds, research, facilitate self-help groups, protect the environment, deliver meals, support the arts.*
- **Components:** how does it do this? What are the parts of each of these functions? *Collect food – make sure all the shelves are stocked.*
- **Tasks:** what specifically needs to be done? Identify the individual tasks required to get the job done. *Keep inventory, receive foods, stock shelves.*

#### 3. Identify the skills necessary for the tasks.

- **Skill analysis:** fundamental elements of the work requirement - characteristics and abilities.
- **Skill variety:** most jobs require more than one skill and involve different degrees of responsibility.
- **Autonomy:** responsibility is a factor that affects job satisfaction – some may want a great deal of autonomy; some may want to do routine tasks.

#### 4. Identify and describe volunteer assignments.

- Identify a series of volunteer assignments that will
  - help the organization achieve its mandate
  - reflect the breakdown of the organization's work into functions, components and tasks
  - outline the kinds of skills and abilities that will be needed for the assignment

#### 5. Match volunteers to assignments.

- Having taken Steps 1 to 4, you now
  1. know the skills needed
  2. can set the terms of your agreement with the volunteer
  3. have a basis for providing feedback
- When assignments are outlined in writing and confirmed in a signed agreement, identifying and managing performance issues in a timely and constructive way is less difficult.

### Job Analysis Chart - Example

The following example chart is adapted from Volunteer Canada's "Job Design Theory" and provides suggestions for isolating functions, components and tasks depending on the organization's mandate. The blank chart on the next page can be used for your own organization's job analysis.

Org.	Health care organization (many staff & volunteers)	Community food bank (some staff & volunteers)	Soccer league (no staff, all volunteers)
Mandate	To eradicate a specific illness and promote quality of health	To provide good food to people in need of assistance	To teach kids to play soccer; to promote healthy activity and good sportsmanship
Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Program development</li> <li>• Public relations</li> <li>• <b>Fundraising</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquiring food</li> <li>• Organizing food drives</li> <li>• Soliciting donations</li> <li>• Organizing space</li> <li>• Filling food baskets</li> <li>• Managing people</li> <li>• <b>Distributing food</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition and awards</li> <li>• Registration</li> <li>• Fundraising</li> <li>• Supervision</li> <li>• Officiation</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• <b>Game schedule</b></li> </ul>
Components	of Fundraising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct mail</li> <li>• Donor recognition</li> <li>• <b>Corporate Awards Night</b></li> <li>• Donor support</li> <li>• Corporate development</li> </ul>	of Distributing food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill the food requests</li> <li>• <b>Make sure shelves are stocked</b></li> <li>• Communicate needs to office</li> <li>• Provide emergency relief</li> <li>• Training volunteers</li> </ul>	of Game scheduling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Plan the schedule</b></li> <li>• Book the Field</li> <li>• Organize Finals</li> </ul>
Tasks	for organizing Corporate Awards Night <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee awards committee</li> <li>• Organize entertainment</li> <li>• Make arrangements for the dinner</li> <li>• Sell tickets</li> <li>• Promote the event</li> <li>• Solicit prizes</li> </ul>	for making sure shelves are stocked <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep inventory</li> <li>• Receive food and stock</li> <li>• Review client needs &amp; pass information on to solicitation team</li> <li>• Organize food for distribution</li> <li>• Supervise volunteers</li> </ul>	for planning the schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review teams</li> <li>• Determine dates</li> <li>• Co-ordinate Finals</li> </ul>



### Job Analysis Chart

Organization Name:

Organization Mandate:

Function	Components	Task
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundraising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Awards Night</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversee awards committee</li> <li>Make arrangements for dinner</li> <li>Sell tickets &amp; promote the event</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct mail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize mailing list</li> <li>Prepare mailout design</li> <li>Promote direct mail funding target</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donor recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convene committee</li> <li>Research “donor wall” designers</li> <li>Create “donor wall” proposal</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update corporate relations list</li> <li>Establish board-level connections</li> <li>Plan corporate breakfast</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul>

Function	Components	Task
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## Position Description Template

To help you structure your position description, this template indicates the most common elements volunteer recruiters include. Be sure to identify everything a potential volunteer might need to know so that they can determine if they are the right fit for your organization

### **Position Title**

The title should be brief and descriptive.

### **Objective**

Briefly describe the service being provided by the volunteer, how it will affect the clients being served, and how it fits in with the organization's mission.

### **Tasks and Responsibilities**

List all the tasks and responsibilities associated with the position. Be specific and break down tasks from beginning to end.

### **Qualifications**

Indicate the knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience required for the position. Include hard skills (proficient in the use of Microsoft Office) and soft skills (works well with others).

### **Commitment**

Specify whether the position is short-term, long-term, occasional or ongoing. Specify the duration of the commitment, and the number of volunteer hours required (e.g., three hours per week for six months).

### **Start Date**

Indicate whether there is a precise start date and if so, when it is.

### **Location**

Indicate the address where the volunteer work will take place and whether or not the location is accessible.

### **Benefits**

List all benefits to the volunteer, such as learning new skills, meals provided, volunteer recognition events, and meeting new people.

### **Orientation and Training**

Indicate when and where orientation and training sessions will take place, and whether or not they are mandatory.

### **Screening Requirements**

Determine which screening steps to use based on the level of risk associated with the position. Indicate whether personal and/or professional references will be required, and whether or not a police records check will be required.

## Recruitment Strategy

### Internal recruitment strategy

Recruitment begins from within. Communicate on-going and new needs to staff and volunteers within your organization.

### External recruitment strategy

Use social media. It can vastly expand awareness of your goals and needs. Social media has different audiences based on the medium: Snapchat – youth; Twitter- 15-25; Instagram/Pinterest – 18-30; Facebook – 25-55; LinkedIn – business/professional oriented audience.

### Recruitment tools

Is your own website an effective recruitment tool? Where do you post?

### Cause-based Recruiting

- Consider places to promote your organization's volunteer needs where your cause resonates.
- Begin at home: communicate your volunteer needs to your organization's community – staff, clients, employers of volunteers, other stakeholders.
- In your messaging, place your cause in broader context of social change/justice/civic society.

### Skills-based Recruiting

- Consider where you would find people who have, or want to develop, the skills or abilities that you need. Are they retired teachers or bus drivers? Newcomers to Canada? Students or young professionals?
- Diverse sources of volunteers can be approached with role descriptions that identify actual abilities: sitting or standing, basic English, virtual availability.

### Recruit with a clear message – make sure volunteers will know:

- What they will do
- What their work will contribute to the organization
- What abilities they should have
- What the steps are in the screening process
- What benefits are offered



## STRATEGY IS KEY

Creating a recruitment strategy allows your organization to recruit and retain a constant flow of volunteers. Many organizations make their recruitment strategy publicly accessible by merely showcasing the process for volunteer recruitment on their website and in postings. Take a look around at similar organizations to get ideas!

## Posting Volunteer Roles Online

Volunteer Toronto's new website allows you to easily post volunteer positions accessible by thousands of potential volunteers. Posting volunteer positions is only open to Community Groups and Subscribers. Go to [volunteertoronto.ca](http://volunteertoronto.ca) to learn more about becoming a Subscriber! This step-by-step guide will show you how to post on Volunteer Toronto's volunteer board.

1. Click on the "Submit an Opening" button.
2. Enter the basic information for your position.
3. Select position categories (plural!) from the drop down menu. Categories are what website guests use to search for opportunities, so we encourage you to select ALL categories that apply. These include both the "Suitable for" categories, as well as the more descriptive categories. Use the CTRL button to click on multiple categories.
4. Indicate the time frame of the position under "Type of Position." Choose from the drop down menu options: One day or less, Short term (less than 3 months), Long term (3 months or more).
5. Please DO NOT fill out the Education and Salary fields, as these are volunteer positions. You can simply leave them blank!
6. You have the option to allow applicants to apply through the website. If you decide to opt-out, please provide application instructions in the contact field.
7. Provide contact information for application purposes. The field is entirely open, but we recommend that you include:
  - a. Contact name
  - b. Position title
  - c. Phone number
  - d. Fax (if relevant)
  - e. Email address

*If you decided to opt-out of online applications, remember to include application instructions!*

8. Create a description for your position. Provide as much information and detail as you can so that users can have their questions answered before contacting you. This will ensure that your selection process will go as smoothly as possible!  
In addition to the position description itself, we suggest that you include information on transportation, language, age, time commitment, task requirements, and accessibility.
9. After you've created a detailed description, make sure your contact info at the bottom of the page is correct and corresponds to the contact fields above. Then answer a simple question and submit!



## **Six Tips from Volunteer Toronto's Youth Auditors**

### **Create a strong online presence - Robyn, 16**

The Internet is undeniably one of the biggest outlets to reel in the youth demographic of today. Zeroing in your attention to just a few of the most prominent social websites like Facebook and Twitter allows non-profits to bring in youth free of charge on the biggest outlets on the Internet. A positive and relatable (but not trying too hard- no one likes a marketing team who thinks teens love hashtags to the point of overuse) presence online and constant use of social media accounts can definitely help increase your engagement with youth.

Don't forget your organization's own website can be a simple yet effective tool to engage youth too. As long as your website can be found by a simple Google search of key terms and has an easy to navigate interface, you're good to go. One of the things I've found is that some non-profits forget to update their websites, leaving their information stuck in 2010 with applications dated the same way. Make sure to always keep your information up to date and provide regular updates with visuals to keep your youth volunteers informed on your mission and organization's endeavours.

### **Remember they're students before they're volunteers - Katie, 16**

High school students have an evident commitment during their weekdays - attending school. This has a huge impact on our availability to volunteer, and organizations should always take this into consideration when offering volunteering shifts and roles to youth. It's unfair and unrealistic to ask students to volunteer during school hours, which typically run from 9AM to 3PM. Weekday evening shifts should begin at a time that gives students ample time to get to the location from school, and should end early enough for the student to get home comfortably without risking their safety by travelling late at night.

If you want to engage youth, ensure you have shifts available during evenings (4PM-8PM), weekends, vacations like March break, long weekends, and of course, the summer. Additionally, it is important for organizations to take financial concerns into consideration, especially with high school students. Offering TTC bus tickets makes a difference.

### **Don't forget to show your appreciation - Steven, 17**

We don't generally expect anything in return for our time spent volunteering except for fond memories and a sense of altruism, but it's always nice to get something cool! Any perks you can offer your volunteers, such as an appreciation party or concert tickets, will always brighten our days and add to our experience. And at the very least, a heartfelt "thank you" goes a long way.

### **Aim to create a positive volunteering environment - Josh, 16**

When it comes to teenagers, volunteering can be a scary thing; they are vulnerable to a setting they are not used to being a part of. The best way to overcome this is by ensuring that volunteers feel comfortable in the environment they'll be working in.

Firstly take care to match youth with roles that fit their skill set, talents, interests and level of commitment. They'll enjoy volunteering if they're doing something that they're interested in.

In addition, it may be their first time volunteering so they may not know what to expect from their new volunteer role. Always clearly explain the organization's policies, safety procedures and the planned schedule. This way, the youth will know what to expect that day, and what is expected of them.

Also encourage open communication between staff and volunteers. Be welcoming and supportive of any concerns of your youth, especially when it comes to carrying out tasks that they don't feel comfortable doing. They should be able to speak up about anything and at any time.

Lastly, volunteering is an opportunity to meet volunteers of the same age that share similar interests. Volunteering is much more enjoyable when you're not alone. Allow your youth to interact from time to time to succeed in creating the perfect volunteering environment.

### **Recognize how beneficial volunteering can be as a learning experience - HyunGu, 15**

Non-profits should embrace how much youth can learn from volunteering with their organization.

Most students volunteer to both foster a hobby and learn skills that they cannot learn at school. When marketing to youth applicants, emphasize the transferrable skills that volunteers can gain from the role.

And if possible, create youth leadership roles for youth who are particularly motivated and enthusiastic. Give your youth committee the license and guidance to adapt the youth volunteer program to fit the needs of both your organization and the youth volunteers themselves.

### **Ask for feedback..and also give it - Steven, 17**

When I volunteer, knowing that I'm valued and that my opinion matters motivates me. Organizations should encourage volunteers to give feedback on their experience both during and after their term. This can be done with a survey, an exit interview, or any other way you see fit.

Furthermore, feedback can go both ways. Any positive feedback and constructive criticism on how I'm performing my role will help me grow as a volunteer. Also, it's always great to know how my contribution has made an impact! Regular one-on-one reports are great, as are organization newsletters to update your volunteers on the progress of the organization's work as whole.

The Youth Auditors are a team of high school students who all have substantial experience volunteering in their communities and who are keen to use their own experiences to help non-profits improve how they work with youth volunteers. Youth Audits are a free service of Volunteer Toronto - find out more [here!](#)

### Social Media as a Recruitment Tool

Social media is a popular means to recruit volunteers online, especially youth. As generations change, different types of social media are popular with different audiences. Knowing the type of posts for the right social media tool and audience will help you effectively recruit volunteers of all ages, especially tech-influenced youth.

This chart can help you determine how you can use each social media tool to recruit, and what age range it targets:

Website/ App	Type / Age Audience	Parameters	Post
<b>Facebook</b>	Social Network 25-55	Text, media & links	<i>Example:</i> Status Update from organization page about exciting upcoming volunteer roles.
<b>Twitter</b>	Microblogging 15-25	140 characters of text, with links & media	<i>Example:</i> Short one-liner about impact and role availability with link to apply
<b>Instagram</b>	Photo Sharing 18-30	Square photos/short videos with minimal text	<i>Example:</i> Video of “day in the life of a volunteer” with snippets/individual images
<b>YouTube/ Vimeo</b>	Video 14+	Video media only with active comment section	<i>Example:</i> Video created by volunteer managers or past volunteers showing the role and positive aspects
<b>Tumblr</b>	Share-Blog 16-35	Mixed media blog, usually re-shared/re-posted	<i>Example:</i> Viral media or image macro with overlaid text about volunteering, or personal blog post addressing journey of volunteer
<b>Pinterest</b>	Link Share-Blog 18-30	Share links and photos from other sites	<i>Example:</i> Make a “Pin Board” of similar roles or of projects a volunteer could do in a role
<b>Snapchat</b>	Messaging 14-22	Video, photos and text that disappear after viewing	<i>Example:</i> Short, enticing snippet of exciting volunteer opportunity followed by QR code of link to apply
<b>Reddit</b>	News Aggregate 16+	Mixed media, news, text & links for aggregation and re-posting	<i>Example:</i> Can be anything, often reposted from one of the other tools
<b>LinkedIn</b>	Professional Network 24+	Professional text and minimal media uploads, including blogs	<i>Example:</i> Status update, link or blog post about value of volunteering in this role

### Being Youth Ready

Adapted from “Making Room for Young People” by Le Réseau de l’action bénévole du Québec & Volunteer Canada. Rate how well each of the following statements apply to your organization on a scale of 1 to 5 to see how well your program recruits and works with youth volunteers.

Part 1 - Awareness & Realities of Youth		1 = does not apply at all / 5 = fully applies
1	A person in our organization has been tasked with finding information and/or developing tools specifically for recruiting youth volunteers	1 2 3 4 5
2	Our organization has a standardized definition of youth (e.g. persons under 30, individuals 12-19, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
3	Our organization’s board, staff and volunteers are receptive to the integration of youth volunteers	1 2 3 4 5
4	Our organization currently offers flexible schedules to meet the realities of youth volunteer commitments	1 2 3 4 5
5	Our organization is prepared to give youth volunteers authority and autonomy to lead, manage or direct their own initiatives	1 2 3 4 5
6	Our organization understands and expects that volunteerism may mean different things to youth, and will work with youth to create a common meaning	1 2 3 4 5
7	Our organization seeks to utilize the new ideas, vitality and fresh outlook of your volunteers to encourage growth and development	1 2 3 4 5
TOTAL		

**Part 1 Total + Part 2 Total + Part 3 Total = FINAL TOTAL**

\_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

If you got:

85-100 – You’re a leader!

65-84 – Keep up the good work, but you can do more

50-64 – You can do better, some things need to be improved

0-50 – You need to change your approach!

Part 2 - Recruiting & Integrating Youth		1 = does not apply at all / 5 = fully applies
1	Volunteer managers/coordinators are able to meet with and interview youth in familiar surroundings – schools, community/recreation centres	1 2 3 4 5
2	Our organization's website has a section geared toward youth	1 2 3 4 5
3	Our organization regularly receives volunteer applications from youth	1 2 3 4 5
4	Our organization has in the past or plans to in the future collaborate with other organizations to ensure the best fit for youth volunteers	1 2 3 4 5
5	Youth (people under 30) sit on the board of directors of our organization	1 2 3 4 5
6	Our organization encourages youth volunteers to review and revise the procedures for recruiting other youth volunteers	1 2 3 4 5
7	Our organization has in place or is planning to implement a mentorship program integrating youth volunteers	1 2 3 4 5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	

Part 3 - Supporting & Developing Youth		1 = does not apply at all / 5 = fully applies
1	Our organization provides proper training on volunteer duties and other aspects to youth volunteers – and advertises the potential of these trainings to prospective volunteers	1 2 3 4 5
2	The person in charge of volunteer resources or the person working with youth volunteers keeps track of the skills, objectives and motivations of youth volunteers	1 2 3 4 5
3	Our organization explicitly recognizes the contribution of youth volunteers and they are given an important role in the organization	1 2 3 4 5
4	Our volunteer management resources (staff, online tools, scheduling) are suited to the skill level and understanding of youth volunteers	1 2 3 4 5
5	Youth volunteers with our organization help to actively recruit other youth volunteers and take leadership/mentorship roles for incoming youth	1 2 3 4 5
6	Our organization listens and responds to the needs and ideas of youth volunteers	1 2 3 4 5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	



### Recruitment Messaging for Seniors/Boomers

Recruiting seniors/baby boomers (individuals over 55 years) can sometimes be easy depending on the program – but if you want to include a broad range of age groups in your program that may not initially seem enticing to an older demographic, you can work on specific messaging for the seniors/boomers audience and understand why this demographic volunteers.

#### From Volunteer Canada's Building Blocks for Boomer Engagement:

Motivations for volunteering change with life circumstances.

#### WORK

The link between age and retirement is eroding, as the majority of people in their late 50's are still working. Meanwhile, large numbers are choosing a phased-in retirement plan.

#### CAREGIVING

Baby boomers are also increasingly finding themselves caring for aging parents while also supporting their children.

#### PARTNERSHIPS

Some baby boomers are looking to volunteer with their partner during their retirement, while others may be adjusting to a recent divorce or loss and seeking an opportunity to make new connections.

#### Volunteerism as a legacy

- Committing to and assisting a cause
- Maintaining personal wellbeing
- Making meaningful contributions after work age

#### Volunteerism as personal development

- Connecting/networking with others
- Learning and developing skills
- Building community

When marketing to this audience, consider both the experience they have gained over years in the community and the benefits they can gain from doing something new. Your key recruitment messages should consider the two areas above, for example:

- Apply your well-honed skills or learn some valuable new skills
- Connect with others in your community and work toward a collective goal/cause
- Create new networks to share ideas, develop skills and work together
- Stay active with various opportunities and enjoy the sunshine while helping out the community

## Using the Data on Senior/Boomer Volunteering

### What is the value of older volunteers?

In the 2013 Canadian survey of Giving, Volunteering & Participating – [reported in 2015](#):

- In 2013, 28% of all Canadian volunteers were aged 55 and older, compared with 26% in 2010, 24% in 2007 and 23% in 2004.
- Older people, when they volunteer, are more likely to do certain types of activities. For example, in 2013, 42% of volunteers aged 55 and over sat on a committee or board, compared with 34% of volunteers aged 35 to 54 and 26% of volunteers aged 15 to 34.
- Younger seniors who volunteered contributed the highest average annual hours in 2013. In particular, volunteers aged 65 to 74 spent about 231 hours volunteering, almost double the number of hours (122 hours) recorded for those aged 35 to 44.
- These population aging trends were also evident in the age profile of “top volunteers”, defined here as the 25% of volunteers who contributed the most hours over the previous year. In 2013, older Canadians aged 55 and over represented 38% of these top volunteers, up from 31% in 2004.
- Older volunteers are also more likely to provide health care or support, such as companionship, through an organization: 20% of volunteers aged 55 and over provided that type of care, compared to 15% of volunteers aged 35 to 54. On the other hand, older volunteers are less likely to teach, educate or mentor, or to coach, referee or officiate.

### Understanding this data:

- The age of volunteers in Canada is slowly increasing as the population ages
- Older volunteers, while overall less likely to volunteer, contribute more hours
- Older volunteers are willing to do specific roles younger volunteers may not be qualified for or interested in (health care, companionship, committees/boards)
- Working with these age groups can allow for longer commitments and more consistent turnout year-after-year (as volunteerism among this age group continues to grow)

## DEFINING BOOMERS

How do you define senior or boomer? Some organizations use different ages to determine seniors or baby boomers, and as the period since the baby boom began grows larger, these definitions may change. Make sure your organization has a definition of senior/boomer to aid in recruitment.

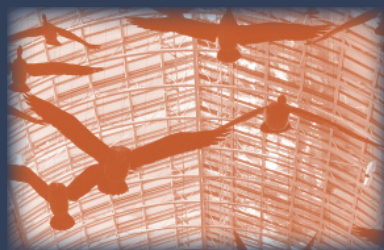
### Analyzing Barriers for Newcomers

Recruiting newcomers as volunteers for your organization can lead to a considerable increase in community representation and potential volunteers. Sometimes, organizations create barriers to newcomer recruitment. This chart can help you identify these barriers and work to eliminate them and increase volunteer representation.

Recruitment Barrier	Opportunity
Position promotion may never reach newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote in diverse communities (physical and online message/bulletin boards, community events, organizational cross-promotion)</li> </ul>
Newcomers may “self-exclude” due to a lack of fluency in English (or main organization language)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide materials, forms, letters of agreement – in clear, basic level language</li> <li>If fluency is required, evaluate literacy and fluency at the screening and selection level, don’t turn away potential volunteers sight unseen</li> </ul>
Newcomers may not understand what is needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide full information about steps involved in the process and why each step is required</li> <li>Include general information about volunteering (not limited to your organization) at info sessions or in info packages</li> </ul>
Newcomers may not understand what is involved in the screening and selection process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be flexible with references and other screening requirements, if that is appropriate for the position</li> <li>Ensure mandates and expectations are clearly stated</li> </ul>
Newcomers may feel intimidated by the selection process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a consistent communication approach for all candidates</li> <li>Interview candidates in a quiet space to minimize confusion</li> <li>Acknowledge past accomplishments of the volunteer</li> </ul>
Organization isn’t “properly prepared” to take on newcomer volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage staff to develop opportunities for volunteers with matching skills</li> <li>Support the creation of a diverse staff and volunteer environment to support the organization’s community</li> </ul>
<i>Think of other barriers your organization may face and write them here</i>	<i>Think of solutions and opportunities for success and write them here</i>

### Six Tips for Recruiting & Engaging Newcomers

- 1.** Be aware of the challenges and prepare to meet them – think ahead! Make sure you know what challenges may come up (see Analyzing Barriers) so that you know how to create solutions.
- 2.** Allow for more time at the beginning of the volunteer's involvement to coach – when you do recruit newcomers, you may need to plan more time in the orientation and training process to ensure your new volunteer is ready to go.
- 3.** Be very clear at all points: in your position posting, your organization's mission, the role responsibilities and expectations – this is helpful for all potential volunteers, make sure applicants know who your organization is, what the role is all about and if they are a good fit for the role.
- 4.** Coach and prepare staff to work effectively with newcomers – remember that one of the goals of your volunteer program is to represent your community to serve it better; make sure that your staff are on board with this notion and with working with newcomer volunteers to allow for an effective – and culturally competent – workplace.
- 5.** Be creative and flexible – reaching new communities and newcomer audiences may require different approaches to recruitment marketing and position posting:
  - a.** Consider community organizations that serve newcomers and promote through those organizations' communications (newsletters, message boards, mail-outs).
  - b.** Post roles electronically in multiple locations – social media (Facebook/Twitter/LinkedIn) & different volunteer boards that may reach newcomer audiences.
  - c.** Word-of-mouth within newcomer communities may be a useful tool for recruitment as well, make connections and networks to help get the word out.
- 6.** Change is good! When working to be inclusive of newcomer volunteers, remember that their values and ideas are just as valid as any volunteer's – try to make all volunteers a part of the change and growth of your organization, including having newcomers help with recruitment of other newcomers!



### UNDERSTANDING NEWCOMERS

Newcomers are a valuable resource but may also be unable to commit long term to roles. Often, newcomer volunteers are searching for full- or part-time paid work and may leave their volunteer role to pursue these opportunities. Ensure your organization is ready with succession plans!



## Considering Family Volunteers

Family volunteering is a growing trend across the sector, as more youth and adults want to give back to their community in a distinctive and energizing way. As a unique type of group volunteer, families can be parents with children, older parents with adult children, or even large families with varying age groups among parents, children, cousins, aunts and uncles and grandparents. Recruiting for – and catering to – family volunteers can be challenging but also has considerable positive outcomes, especially creating lifelong volunteerism for children and youth.

### Key Considerations for Recruiting Families:

- One of the best ways to encourage parents of children to volunteer is to offer on-site child care that is run by or related to your organization; this will entice parents to volunteer while their children are getting looked after and maybe even learning about your organization and the impact of their parents' volunteer action.
- When recruiting for families, offer similar but different opportunities for parents and children – for example, if your organization is looking for community gardening volunteers, have the parents handle more of the “heavy lifting” (moving soil, planting trees and larger items) while the kids can be grouped together and plant flowers or fruits/vegetables while learning from an adult volunteer or staff person about the benefits of community gardens. Offering similar volunteer roles with slightly different requirements can encourage children and their parents to want to return as both groups gain their own benefits.
- Create a legacy through family volunteering by allowing parents to teach their own children about the benefits (and reasons) for volunteering with your organization. In recruiting for families, let them know that you'll provide resources to help parents create these “teachable moments” before, during and after their volunteer engagement.
- Another consideration for family volunteering is to create – and promote – unique opportunities that families can do as a group. Consider options that allow the children to act independently while being with their parents working on the same activity (painting a community mural, testing out a recreation centre's facilities).
- Highlight the importance and value of family participation in your recruitment messaging; you want to grab parents' attentions while also indicating how important the volunteer role is to the cause and to the potential benefits for their children.
- Remember that family scheduling can be challenging – what time do the parents have meetings, work and appointments? What time do the children have school, classes, play dates and extra-curricular activities? Be flexible with scheduling and make this very clear on recruitment messaging.
- Think about different, family-focussed avenues for recruitment, such as community parenting Facebook groups, local play areas and parks, other community/recreation programs and inclusion in municipal recreation newsletters.



### Crafting & Adapting Volunteer Roles for Families

Here are a couple examples of “solo” volunteer roles that can be adapted for families. Think of some of the volunteer roles your organizations offer and consider how they can be changed for family volunteers!

Solo Role	Family Role
“Warehouse” packing volunteer	Families work together to create food/care/toy packages for at-risk youth and families – give them general information about recipients to encourage charitable and sharing values for children
Special Event Volunteer	Encourage parents and children to help with areas of special events (especially family friendly ones); allow children to be leaders to other children while parents work on registration or other roles
Friendly visitor in a hospital/health care setting	Have families visit children or adults in hospitals or long term care facilities to create a sense of community and family for those receiving care

### PREPARING FOR FAMILIES

No two families are alike, just like no two volunteers are alike! Have a lot of different opportunities available even within the same role for families. This will cater to different areas of growth and learning opportunities for children and parents.





# Volunteer Toronto

## Volunteer Recruitment Resource Guide & Workbook

### Next Steps

To continue your volunteer management journey, there are a number of other workbooks created by Volunteer Toronto to assist you every step of the way:

#### Basic

- Planning, Recruiting & Selecting
- Training, Supervising & Supporting
- Evaluating, Retaining & Developing
- Engaging Group Volunteers
- Professional Development for Managers of Volunteers

#### Intermediate

- Planning for Volunteer Involvement
- Volunteer Selection
- Orientation & Training
- Volunteer Retention & Recognition

#### Advanced

- Giving Volunteers Feedback
- Accessibility and the AODA

Check out our **Online Learning Centre** for a variety of courses to further enhance your learning and improve your practice - go to [volunteertoronto.ca/?page=OnlineLearning](http://volunteertoronto.ca/?page=OnlineLearning)

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