



Budgeting for Volunteers

Volunteering is freely given but is not cost free

Volunteers contribute their skills time and energy and their contribution adds value to what an organisation does, however, Involving Volunteers in your organisation will cost money and you will need to raise funds to cover these costs

Do you know how much it costs your organisation to work with volunteers? Most people think it's just about reimbursing out of pocket expenses, but in reality it's much more than that. There are many hidden costs to working with volunteers, and if you don't know what they are, you will not be in a position to raise the funds necessary to meet these costs.

A good fundraising plan will include all the costs associated with recruiting, supporting and recognising volunteers and the contribution they make, so before you submit your next funding bid, consider the real cost of working with volunteers As well as the benefits.

Start up and recruitment costs

There are always costs to starting any kind of volunteering programme, these include:

- Publicity and Advertising - If you want to recruit from outside your immediate area, you will need to do more than put up a few posters, advertising, even in the local press can cost quite a bit. Advertising for staff whether paid or unpaid is a legitimate cost so don't be afraid to include it in your fundraising strategy and grant applications
- Equipment and Materials – think about what volunteers will need to carry out their role. Even if it's just the use of a desk for half a day per week, this will cost your organisation in terms of heating, lighting etc

Selection and interviewing costs

- Staff time – who is going to actually draft up the role descriptions, do the press releases, deal with enquiries from potential volunteers and help select them? If it is a paid worker, then the cost will be their hourly rate for the amount of time this takes, if the management committee will do this then the cost will be their out of pocket expenses
- Postage, telephone and stationery
- DBS Checks and taking up references

Supervision and management costs

- Support & Supervision - Who will induct and supervise the volunteers on a day to day basis? You need to know how much time will be involved in this to work out the costs
- Insurance – depending on the volunteering roles, you might have to take out additional insurance (see insurance leaflet for further information)
- Training – at the very least, volunteers will need induction training and on the job training. Some roles require specialist training which costs money, you need to budget for this

Volunteer support and recognition

- Social Events and Get-togethers are important in retaining volunteers; at the very least your organisation will have to provide a venue and refreshments
- Celebration events and awards there are many local and national events that recognise and celebrate volunteering
- You need to invest in these if you want to keep your own motivated and committed. Recognition is a legitimate cost of volunteering and should be budgeted for

Volunteer out of pocket expenses

Nobody should be out of pocket as a result of their volunteering, so think carefully about the kind of expenses your organisation wants to re-imburse if you want to recruit volunteers from the whole community. Legitimate out of pocket expenses can include:

- Travel costs
- Meals and refreshments
- Child/care costs
- Telephone/other agreed expenses

Where can I get help with this?

- If you are part of a larger organisation or a branch of a national body, ask about policies relating to volunteering expenses before you work out your budget.
- New Horizons www.newhorizonsdoncaster.co.uk

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