

7 steps to volunteering

PART 1



Thinking of volunteering?

FreddyMatch is here to help you find your perfect volunteering role and succeed, but please keep in mind that although we make the match, you need to make the change. To ensure that it is the right fit, you must do your own research on the organisation to which you are committing your time. We want you to get the most out of the experience, and who knows you better than you? This fact sheet is designed to help you make an informed decision and support your choice to volunteer.

Let's start with you

1. CLARIFYING

What do you aim to achieve by volunteering? Are you looking to:

- meet new people
- support a local group
- feel part of a wider community
- share your expertise
- build upon current skills
- simply want to give back
- or have your own personal reasons?

Begin by making three lists – the first about you overall as a person, the second of any characteristics and/or particular skills you would like a volunteering role to use, and the third of your experiences and interests – particularly those you would like to further develop in your volunteering. Please note that this is only to help you focus and choose your best option, not constrain you. For example:

Character traits: good working on my own, like working in a team, work best in well defined roles, like a lot of freedom to make decisions, like variety, like structure, love working with children, love animals...

Personal skills: organiser, IT literate, great cook, numerate, love plumbing, DIY, painting, driving, dancing...

Experiences: at work, with the family, other volunteering, or anything else you believe would be useful

After you've compiled your lists, think about your overall day to day. This will help you discover just how involved you are actually able to be and will help you create an overall picture of what you'd like to do, where you'd like to go, and how much time you are able to dedicate to the organisation.

2. PLANNING

Does the organisation's mission and vision match your interests, skills, and aims?

How much time can you give and when?

Are there things that you will need some flexibility over i.e. family, work commitments, etc.

Do you have restrictions on location?

Does your car insurance cover you for any travelling associated with your volunteering?

If the organisation wants to take up references, who will you use?

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PART 2



Now let's figure out your best options

Ask yourself each of the following questions to help narrow down the perfect volunteering opportunity for you.

3. MANAGEMENT

Does the organisation have a management structure that supports volunteers?

Does the organisation have a data protection policy?

Will it keep your information safe?

Does the organisation understand and minimise any risks you may be open to?

4. TRAINING

Is there an induction programme?

Will further training be provided, if needed?

5. CARING

What does the organisation do to keep you informed?

Who can you turn to for help or advice?

Is there a Health and Safety Policy?

Do they offer insurance?

Will you get expenses paid? (i.e. parking, travel, etc.)

Are there regular formal and informal meetings that give opportunities for you to meet other volunteers and staff?

6. RECOGNITION

How does the organisation support you giving feedback?

How do they work with the volunteers?

How does the organisation handle new ideas? What could be done better? What went really well?

What would have made the volunteering experience easier or more enjoyable?

Is there a review process?

Is there a rewards and recognition scheme?

7. APPLYING

Use FreddyMatch to help you find organisations that might fit what you are looking for and hoping to achieve. Browse the FreddyMatch.org website to contact organisations that are looking for volunteers and discover who you would like to work with. It's entirely your decision!

If you need references, use any guidance available to help choose referees that fit the role best.

Good luck on your journey and thank you for volunteering!