



# KCR

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Enhancing Lives - Connecting Communities

# RECRUITING VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERS

IN 2021 AND BEYOND



# INTRODUCTION

Virtual volunteering is continually increasing in popularity among non-profit organizations. Some reasons for this include the availability of technology, roles that can be done solely on a digital device and, more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic which caused many organizations to adapt their traditionally in-person roles into virtual opportunities as a means to keep their volunteers safe.

Read on for some tips on how to create a virtual volunteer program that works for both your organization and your volunteers! These tips will help you in designing new roles, developing hybrid models for volunteering, and keeping your volunteers engaged.



*I volunteer because I want to make the world a better, more equitable place for all our future generations.*

Jeanette Mergens  
Volunteer55 Ambassador

# VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERING

Through a survey of Central Okanagan volunteers and organizations, KCR found that 59% of participants are comfortable volunteering using a digital device. Participants also indicated that they would volunteer more often if they could do so with more flexibility (48%), from their own home (36%), and/or online (24%).

Some benefits of virtual volunteering include an increase in flexibility and accessibility for volunteers. This could open up opportunities to include volunteers who:

- Don't live in our community
- Have diversabilities
- Are not available during traditional time blocks

New volunteers can lead to an increase in capacity and impact for organizations. In addition, having virtual opportunities can increase productivity and save on operating costs.

When considering implementing virtual volunteering in your organization, identify which needs can be addressed virtually and what aspects of your volunteer opportunities people can do from home.

I would volunteer more often if I could...



*Volunteering is so rewarding. Do what you can [...] every little bit helps. You will get back way more than you give.*

Jeff Stewart  
Volunteer55 Ambassador



# RECRUITMENT



The first step in recruitment is writing an effective position description. This will help clarify what you need from your volunteers and help identify what is in it for them.

Remember, if you can't name reasons why a volunteer would want to fill your position, they probably won't apply. Make sure to state these reasons explicitly in the position description to draw the potential volunteer's attention.

In addition to letting potential volunteers know what they are signing up for, clear position descriptions are a great tool for:

- Recruitment
- Screening
- Supervising and Feedback
- Recognition and Motivation

The [VolunteerConnector's](#) position description template includes Quick Tips to help you write an effective posting.

Effective position descriptions include the position title, general outline, primary responsibilities, skills needed, any training provided, and the time commitment expected from the volunteer. Some other relevant information that you could include is the department the position is in, who the volunteer is responsible to, some secondary skills, and, if applicable, the desired/required experience and any technology they will be using.

For virtual opportunities, outlining the technology a volunteer is required to have, what platforms they will use, and any other technology-related details is essential. Some questions to consider before making a virtual volunteer posting include:

- Will you provide any technology training?
- Will you provide any technology equipment?
- Are you expecting the volunteer to use any specific platforms?
- What resources are needed?
- How will you interview volunteers?
- How will your volunteers receive, review, sign, and submit documents?

# HOW TO GO VIRTUAL

Questions to ask:

- Can the work be successfully completed offsite/virtually?
- What can virtual volunteers do to address these needs and what roles will they fill in your organization?
- Does your organization have the capacity to support a volunteer in this role?
- What are the biggest challenges you are facing?
- What needs are you seeing in your organization?
- If you had more volunteers what would you do?
- What are the needs of your volunteers?

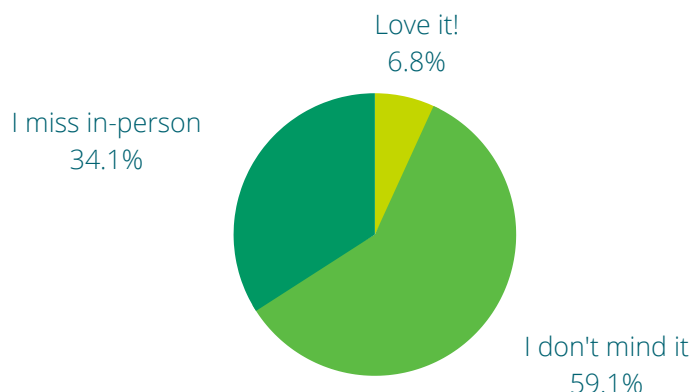
Once you have determined the answers to these questions you will have a clearer picture of how to move forward with implementing virtual volunteering within your organization.

Tips on going virtual:

- Build opportunities based on your needs
- Determine who will manage the volunteers
- Create guidelines for volunteer engagement
- Identify the technology you need
- Write a volunteer position description
- Post to recruiting sites like VolunteerConnector
- Set milestones with deliverables
- Do regular check-ins

Determine what technology you have such as video meeting applications, project management programs, computer equipment, communication platforms, or specific design programs that could be used to support your virtual volunteering program.

How do you feel about virtual volunteering?



# VIRTUAL RECRUITMENT TIPS

## Market your roles online

The [VolunteerConnector](#) allows you to reach a wider audience. VolunteerConnector is a free platform for organizations to post volunteer positions and for volunteers to explore opportunities and apply. Social media and an electronic newsletter are also important places to post your volunteer opportunities.

## Focus on diversity

You can bring more diversity to a volunteer base by doing targeted presentations to newcomers, cultural groups, people with diversabilities, or other special interest groups. Having virtual opportunities and opportunities that can be done from home makes your positions accessible to a larger audience.

## Attend a Volunteer Fair

Even attending an in-person volunteer recruitment event can help you get virtual volunteers. Make sure that you have clear position descriptions so that when an interested volunteer asks about your positions, you have the answers. [KCR Hosts the Okanagan Volunteer Fair every year, the third week in September.](#)

## Let your current volunteers help

Leading the exploration of virtual volunteering could be a role for existing volunteers. This may foster repeat engagement and support volunteers in feeling valued. Including your current volunteers in the recruitment process will also help you address issues that you may not have thought about.



## REFERENCES & RESOURCES

[Okanagan Volunteer Fair](#)

[Overview of Volunteer Management by KCR Community Resources](#)

[The VolunteerConnector](#)

[Virtual Volunteering by VolunteerMatch](#)

[Volunteer Alberta](#)

[VolunteerPro](#)