

Preview!

Employee Volunteering: A best practice guide

Practical tips and guidance for businesses who want to benefit from a voluntary partnership, engage their team and embed a successful Employee Volunteering Scheme.



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Introductions

Who is this guide for?

This guide has been written for businesses who want to engage with and support a voluntary organisation, and embed an Employee Volunteering Scheme (EVS) in their workplace.

Businesses large and small can benefit from this guide, but we have targeted it at those who have enough autonomy to implement the points raised in these pages (we know some firms may be restricted by their organisation's wider CSR policy!).

Note: We refer to 'voluntary organisations' in this guide. This term covers charities, community interest companies and un-registered voluntary and community groups.

Who are we?

This guide is brought to you by Bournemouth and Poole Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) and Hireserve.

Bournemouth and Poole CVS is a charity which provides advice and support to 1,500 local voluntary organisations.

Hireserve is a recruitment software provider. Hireserve ATS is trusted by a diverse range of organisations, from not-for-profits and public sector bodies, to global engineering firms and corporates.

Bournemouth and Poole CVS and Hireserve have worked together on a number of initiatives to support and promote employee volunteering.

What are the benefits of employee volunteering?

For businesses:

- ✓ Enhanced staff morale for your team
- ✓ Team building opportunities
- ✓ Skills development outside of employees' day-to-day roles
- ✓ Enhanced reputation with customers and partners
- ✓ May support your organisation's wider approach to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

For voluntary organisations:

- ✓ Benefit from new skills and specialist support they may not otherwise be able to afford or prioritise
- ✓ Enhanced capacity
- ✓ A diverse range of activities can be supported by employee volunteers
- ✓ Enhanced awareness of the organisation's cause amongst business partners
- ✓ Ongoing support from a business

We hope you're enjoying your
preview of the
Employee Volunteering Guide
for Businesses.

The full Guide is coming soon,
so remember to
[register for your copy here!](#)



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Your barriers to employee volunteering

Common challenges

In this section, we're going to take some of the challenges and barriers you might face ahead of embedding an EVS in your organisation.

Crucially, we're also going to explore how you can solve these issues...

1. Work commitments

It's inevitable that work projects, client queries or tightened deadlines will take priority over some CSR initiatives. Your organisation's Service Level Agreements (SLAs) or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) may also have an impact on team resource and the time your staff feel they are able to spend on volunteering projects.

How to address this:

Let's say that you've committed to a monthly volunteering opportunity. The following steps may help:

- ✓ Create a cross-departmental team of volunteers. That way, if one team member cannot attend because they are tied up with a project, others from different departments may still be able to participate.
- ✓ Be open and manage the expectations of your voluntary partner. If you know a work deadline is approaching, take steps to let the voluntary organisation know in good time, so they can plan and resource accordingly.
- ✓ Secure internal buy-in. If your stakeholders are engaged and invested in your EVS, they may be more likely to understand that flexibility is needed around volunteering times.

2. Your business does not identify with the aims of the voluntary organisation

If your team does not engage with the work that your voluntary partner is aiming to do, it may be harder to secure support for your EVS.

How to address this:

- ✓ Before you commit to a partnership with a voluntary organisation, ensure the cause you choose resonates with your team.
- ✓ Look for a cause which has some personal or professional connection to your organisation. For example, if you work in recruitment, perhaps an employability charity.
- ✓ Ask your team for their opinions and to suggest causes close to their hearts, perhaps using an online survey tool.
- ✓ Open a team vote to shortlist and choose the final voluntary organisation.
- ✓ Explore the voluntary partnerships other organisations in your sector have implemented for inspiration.
- ✓ Quantify the voluntary organisation's aims into tangible objectives. For example, donating 10 hours of HR support would have otherwise cost the organisation £XX to outsource this expertise.



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Making a match and building a partnership

How to find a potential voluntary organisation partner

Sometimes a voluntary organisation may approach you directly if they have identified a connection or local link. Often, however, charities do not have the time or resources to reach out to potential corporate partners, so you may need to be proactive in finding a suitable cause.

- ✓ Ask your team for suggestions; they may have a personal connection or link to a cause already.
- ✓ Talk to other organisations – where have they found voluntary partners, and do they have any tips based on their experiences of charity partnerships?
- ✓ Explore opportunities with your local Chamber of Commerce, Volunteer Centre or CVS (Council for Voluntary Services).

“Many will often think of volunteering as helping clear woodland or clean a beach. Of course these are worthy activities but volunteering encompasses so much more. It's often about offering key business and professional expertise in areas such as finance, law and marketing that are essential in any organisation.”

- Ian Girling, Chief Executive
Dorset CIC

How to approach a voluntary organisation partner

- ✓ Establish a frank and open conversation with a potential partner and lay out your objectives, what you can commit to and your overarching aims.
- ✓ Put yourself in your voluntary organisation partner's shoes – again, demonstrate that awareness of their pressures and objectives.
- ✓ Ensure that the right individuals are involved in initial conversations in terms of their understanding of the issues or their scope for decision making.
- ✓ Explore the cost and impact of your proposed EVS.
- ✓ Ascertain what you would determine as a 'success' and the results you want to achieve. Discuss how your potential voluntary organisation partner can help you achieve these.

“50% of charities told us that they take on volunteers with the hope that it will eventually lead to a longer term relationship with a business.”

- Three Hands

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About us

About Bournemouth and Poole CVS

Bournemouth and Poole CVS supports voluntary organisations across Bournemouth and Poole.

The CVS provides a range of services to local voluntary organisations, including:

- ✓ Funding advice
- ✓ Advice on running your organisation
- ✓ Help with finding volunteers
- ✓ A volunteer centre

Website: www.bournemouthcvs.org.uk

Give the CVS a call: 01202 466130

Drop the CVS a note: amy.collins@bournemouthcvs.org.uk



About the Volunteer Pool

The Volunteer Pool is an online volunteering portal, which enables people to search for opportunities to donate their time and skills to local voluntary organisations.

Launched in 2016, the Volunteer Pool website and brand was created by Hireserve, who worked on a pro bono basis to support Bournemouth and Poole CVS with the project.

Learn more: www.thevolunteerpool.com

About Hireserve and Hireserve ATS

Hireserve ATS is a powerful Applicant Tracking System designed for in-house recruitment teams.

Hireserve ATS is used to streamline organisations' recruitment processes, to automate administration and to reduce the time and costs associated with internal hiring.

Over the years Hireserve has developed a strong presence in the third sector, working with organisations as diverse as Reed, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Established in 1997, our reputation has been built on a forward-thinking approach to software development, continually anticipating the needs of in-house recruiters and responding with intuitive, capable and robust talent acquisition technology.

This approach, underpinned by award-winning customer care, is why organisations both in the UK and internationally trust Hireserve ATS to automate, streamline and enhance their recruitment processes.

Hireserve creates recruitment software with a human touch.

Find out more: hireserve.com

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