



# VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT FACTSHEET

Volunteers are the lifeblood of athletics, making up almost 100% of the 'workforce' of clubs. Recruiting volunteers is not an easy task, made more challenging by issues such as the recovery from COVID19 and the current financial crisis. This factsheet provides guidance to help recruit volunteers.

## Plan ahead

As a club, spend time identifying the roles and tasks you need volunteers for. One of the barriers to volunteering is unclear expectations so defining the roles and tasks will help potential volunteers decide whether to step forward in the first instance.

## How to define the role and tasks involved:

- ✓ Identify the roles where you require volunteer support including the time commitment
- ✓ Create a short role description to outline the main tasks and responsibilities
- ✓ Include information on how the volunteer will be supported and any training available to them
- ✓ Ensure the final role profile is agreed by the club committee

## The benefits of defining the role:

- ✓ It helps you identify gaps where you need volunteer support
- ✓ It enables you to attract the right person
- ✓ It helps potential volunteers understand your expectations and the support available
- ✓ It enables the club to assess the scope and needs of the role

## Volunteer Coordinator



Having an individual, or possibly more than one person, take responsibility for recruitment and retention of volunteers can enhance the volunteer experience, develop a strong volunteering culture and ensure everyone feels confident, supported, recognised and valued. An individual or group of volunteers who are personable, approachable and patient, with experience of the club or group, who can explain what volunteering means to them, can help win new recruits over and keep existing people coming back.

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**Avoid last minute requests for volunteers.** This could

be perceived as a club that is unorganised and potentially volunteers may feel under pressure or not ready to volunteer last minute.



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## Actively recruit

Being proactive and having a recruitment plan is important if your club wants to recruit volunteers. There will always be a churn in volunteers and the amount of time people can give will vary. There will be no one size fits all solutions so you might want to try a variety of recruitment methods.

### 1 Promote

Promote volunteering opportunities through club websites, newsletters and social media so that new and existing members can see the opportunities available. Make it easy for potential volunteers to get involved and know how to register their interest.

### 2 Speak to people

Each volunteer is unique and has their own needs and motivations. Some will be confident and keen to start. Others may have concerns that hold them back. Speaking to them in advance helps build their confidence and enables you to find out more about them, their motivations and skills, how much time they can give, what they want to be involved in, any training they might need, and if they would prefer interactive, people-facing tasks/roles or something behind the scenes.

### 3 Offer taster sessions

Potential volunteers may be unsure if they have the right skills, they might want to try before they fully commit. Consider offering taster sessions or shadowing existing volunteers to get a feel for the role/tasks. This is a great opportunity to get them interested and make sure their experience is fun so they want to return.

### 4 Organise a recruitment forum

Hosting a recruitment forum or evening for members or local community members to find out more about volunteering at your club will give the opportunity to showcase your club and the volunteer roles that are available. You could tie this into a club training night, event or social occasion.

### 5 Target existing members

The top three reasons why people volunteer are passion for the club, to give something back and being part of the community. Existing members will already have an emotional connection to the club so could easily be hooked in as a volunteer. Consider how you can engage with parents/carers and athletes by direct promotion and include a volunteering section in the club membership forum. Don't overlook younger members. They are the volunteers of the future so giving them a positive experience early on could make all the difference.

### 6 Identify local community organisations

Investigate local community groups and organisations who might help you recruit volunteers or can promote opportunities. People volunteer to be part of the community and give them a sense of purpose.

## Online presence

When looking for more information or opportunities to volunteer at a sports club the internet is the first port of call for lots of people. Your online presence can play an important role in recruiting volunteers. Consider how you promote volunteering roles and showcase your existing volunteers.

**87% of adults in the UK accessed the internet daily or almost every day in 2019.**  
(Office of National Statistics)





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### Top tips



#### Create a positive experience and culture

Build volunteering into your culture so that people want to get involved with your club by:

- linking it into your values
- creating an inclusive approach to recruitment
- keeping your volunteering offer central to your club's development
- making people feel like they have something to offer as a volunteer
- celebrating and showcasing your volunteers
- developing a sense of family or team

Promote the benefits of volunteering and get your volunteers involved in developing tag lines to inspire people, for example 'One club, one team' or 'Working together to achieve more'.

Make it clear that the club relies on volunteers to function – you may be surprised to learn that according to Join In's Making Time report, 55% of the public did not know that sports clubs are run by volunteers!



#### Be open to offers

You may be surprised what talents and experience people may bring and offer to do for you that don't fit into a role but would be useful for your club – don't be confined by preconceptions of what a volunteer in your club does. If you get an offer don't delay, a slow or no response will not create a good first impression of your club.



#### Be flexible

Try to structure the role or tasks to fit in with the volunteers lifestyle i.e. can tasks be done from home and at times that are convenient to them? Define any ad hoc volunteering opportunities i.e., those casual opportunities where volunteers can dip in and out, perhaps working in project teams or working groups. Try to break roles down into interesting, engaging and flexible tasks to offer bite-sized volunteering opportunities that don't take up too much time and can be completed when it is convenient for the volunteer.



#### Consider the language you use

Some people prefer the term 'helping out,' or 'lend a hand' to 'volunteering', which can have longer-term connotations. Others are more likely to respond to the request for ad-hoc/one-off requests for help. Think about who you're speaking to and what is likely to resonate with them. Ensure language used does not discriminate in terms of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.



#### Be explicit and clear about the process

Make it easy for people to express an interest in volunteering whether that be online or by speaking with a club contact. Make the process clear to potential volunteers so they know what to expect each step of the way, for example whether any DBS checks or training are needed. The England Athletics Safer Recruitment Guide will help with this.