

Interviewing Volunteers

The purpose of this quick guide is to outline the process involved in interviewing and screening volunteers.

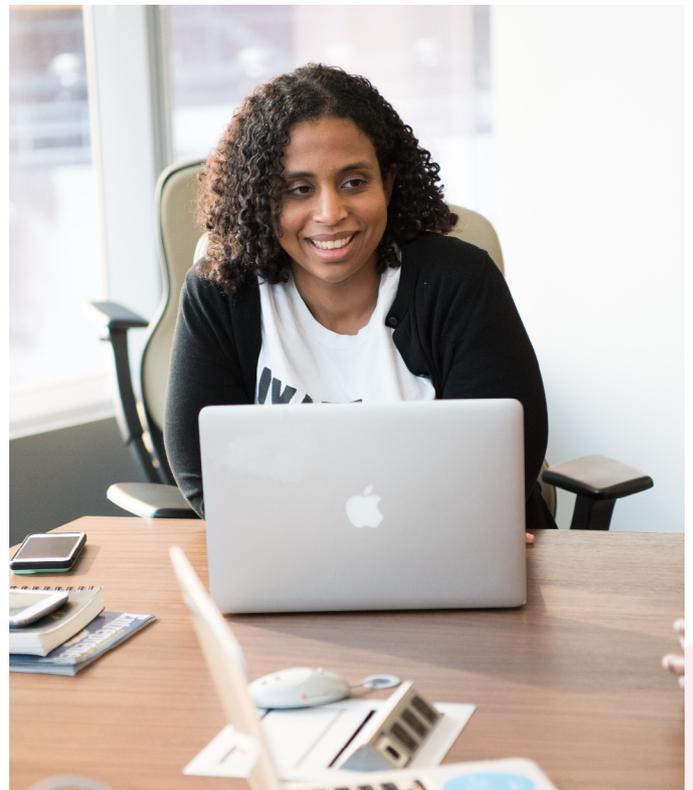
Why interview volunteers?

Volunteer interviews provide leaders of volunteers with valuable insights into a potential volunteer's skills, interest and fit with the organisation.

Interviews can provide:

- a screening opportunity
- a chance to see if values align
- opportunity to learn about skills and abilities
- clues to background and character
- insight into volunteer motivation
- A professional approach

An interview is a great opportunity for a potential volunteer to learn more about your organisation and the role. It is not just for you to learn about them.



Why interview volunteers? (continued)

Information to share with your applicant:

- what your organisation does, the overall strategic goals and objectives
- how the role fits into the organisation
- any challenges the role may involve, for example safety risks, scheduling requirements
- any skills and experience that are required for the role
- the benefits and supports in place such as travel reimbursement, a free coffee with each shift, free training or free parking

It is important to have a planned approach to interviewing potential volunteers. As well as having prepared a defined position with a role description you should also consider:

- Interview plan and questions. Consider providing questions to potential volunteers ahead of the interview so they can understand and process questions. This is a particularly useful way to support newly arrived migrants and people from multicultural backgrounds as well as people who live with a disability.
- Your commitment to diversity and inclusion. This may also give candidates the reassurance they need to disclose any disability or discuss workplace adjustments.
 - what reasonable adjustments are you able to make?
 - is the role accessible to all, regardless of background, ability, sexual orientation, language etc
 - information on what training and support can be provided in the role
 - when and how to notify the candidates they have an interview
 - ask about any communication or accessibility requirements

Interview Preparation

- book in a time and place (this could be online)
- consider how formal you need the interview process to be and where it should be held. Less formal interviews may also be more accessible for some people who find a formal interview process intimidating
- consider the location and time for the interview. If the volunteer will be volunteering on the weekends but works during the week can the interview be held outside of business hours? Can you travel to a location closer to the volunteer to hold the interview? If online does the volunteer have access to a quiet space with internet access?
- Read through any information you have from your applicant:
 - resume
 - messages
 - qualifications and experience

Some Interview – Dos and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Stop talking	Ask leading questions
Be engaged and remove distractions	Decide too soon, take the time to make the right decision
Empathise	Guess their answers
Be patient	Lack knowledge about the position
Remain curious and ask questions	Be unprepared
Prompt the candidate— they may need some help to get started	Talk too much rather than listen
Allow for individual differences	Rush the interview
	Judge personality and overlook factors relating to skills, abilities and knowledge

Following the interview your organisation may have policies and procedures which need to be followed.

You should at least:

- inform successful applicants and let them know what the next steps are
- ensure that all relevant screening checks are conducted for the successful applicant
- create a 'merit list' for unsuccessful applicants that you'd like to consider for future roles, or alternative roles within the organisation. Consider if there is a way

unsuccessful candidates could contribute to your organisation in ways that haven't previously been considered

- inform unsuccessful applicants:
 - when possible, let them know about any other opportunities either within your organisation or externally that they could apply for
 - let them know it's about the role requirements and who would fit best rather than about them personally



The seven State and Territory volunteering peak bodies acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present.

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