

Volunteer Training and Development

The purpose of this quick guide is to outline why you should provide training and development opportunities for volunteers and the best ways to identify those needs. It also includes some suggestions for where to source training.

Why provide training and development for volunteers?

Volunteers are valuable assets for your organisation. Continued skill development of your volunteer team fosters an environment of ongoing learning and aligns with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement. Training and development opportunities for your volunteers can also be highlighted as a benefit of volunteering.

Training and development needs

Identify volunteer training and development needs by asking your volunteers what they are interested in. Annual reviews, regular check-ins, feedback forms or sitting down one on one are all ways to ask them. Some things to keep in mind are:

- how will the training and development enhance their volunteer role?
- does the training and development align to organisational objectives?
- what does the volunteer want to achieve by undertaking the training?
- will training develop new skills or further develop existing ones?

You can undertake a training skills analysis of your volunteers to understand what skills they bring as well as where they may need further development.

Training and development options

Training and development should respond to volunteers' preferred methods of learning. Ask your volunteers their learning preferences through initial conversations and feedback. Offer both formal and informal training and development options to suit volunteer preferences. Online and face to face training and development formats can include:

- webinars, conferences, and meetings
- workshops and seminars
- self paced learning
- recordings
- short courses
- accredited training e.g. First Aid
- research and reports
- mentors/buddies

Mentors and buddies utilise the existing wealth of skills volunteers bring to your organisation. Develop a volunteer mentoring/buddy team to share their skills one on one with volunteers or to deliver group training.

Sourcing training and development

Limited resources and funding can be a barrier to providing training and development opportunities. Some ways to overcome these barriers are:

- look for free online training and webinars that your volunteers can participate in. Search a topic on event platforms such as Eventbrite and Humanitix, often there are free online webinars and trainings available
- connect with specific organisations who may be able to provide free training through their own funding requirements e.g. disability awareness
- apply for related volunteer grant funding through your state or territory
- remember you may be able to call upon your own volunteers to deliver training

Acknowledgement

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