



# Tips for recruiting volunteers

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Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Australian Heritage Festival. Without you, many of the amazing events across the country would simply not happen. As such your feedback is essential: it will help us understand who supports the Australian Heritage Festival and how the event impacts on those taking part.

## Tips for recruiting volunteers

Sometimes it can be a challenge to find suitable and sufficient volunteers. But with a little bit of creativity and strategic planning, you should be able to recruit enough helpers for your event. Before you recruit

- Be clear why you need volunteers: there is likely to be a variety of tasks and roles that people of different skills and levels of experiences could fulfil.
- Decide how you will select your volunteers: will you use application forms, conduct interviews, ask for references, criminal record checks (especially if volunteers are working with vulnerable people) or health checks? Also remember to ensure equal opportunities.
- Think how you will support and manage them: i.e. providing supervision, role descriptions for volunteers, induction & training, establish problem solving procedures.
- Think about how you can recognise your volunteers' contribution: e.g. reimburse expenses, throw a thank-you party or give out certificates

## Creating a volunteering opportunity

To make your recruitment message more effective, ask yourself how your volunteering opportunity can meet your potential volunteers' needs and motivations e.g. point out that they will meet a lot interesting like-minded people or utilise existing skills.

## Where and how to spread the word

There are several methods by which you can publicise your volunteering opportunity.

- **Word of mouth:** Most volunteers are recruited by existing staff, clients, supporters or volunteers. Make sure everyone you know knows that you are trying to recruit, and what the opportunities are.
- **Print:** Posters and flyers can spread your message to a wider audience. When designing printed information remember the principles of your recruitment message. Keep it simple, and reflect the nature of the volunteering opportunities in your design. Depending who you want to reach you can display your posters and flyers at various places : schools and colleges, libraries, town halls and other public buildings, GP and dental surgeries, sports and leisure centres, religious centres, shop windows.

## Where and how to spread the word (cont)

- **Volunteer Centres:** There are around 500 Volunteer Centres or Bureaux across the UK, putting people in touch with organisations who need volunteers. Organisations need to register with their local centre, which might also be able to provide advice and support on working with volunteers.
- **Local media:** Combine your local media campaign to raise awareness of your organisation and HODs event with a call for volunteers.
- **Local companies:** More and more companies are encouraged to support volunteering of their staff as part of their social corporate responsibility policy. A large or medium-sized local employer in your area could well become a source of volunteers. Ask their human resources department whether you could post a call for volunteers on their intranet, internal newsletter or a poster at their staff board. Or maybe you could even address staff at a staff meeting. It's worth exploring as it might lead to other kinds of support.

**And finally: Use your event to capture the addresses of those who'd be interested to become involved in the future.**