Recruiting volunteers
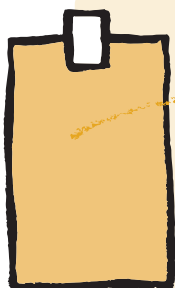
Tips

Create a donut for each role: Recruitment will be more successful if you are clear about the role and expectations are clear for any potential volunteer.
This also improves retention as the elements of the role match their motivation to participate.

Position descriptions: Use your understanding of everyone's expectations for the role to create a brief position description just as you would for a paid role. The position description can be prepared using the Workforce Capability Framework and becomes the primary source of information about the role. This will ensure volunteer roles are described consistently with the relevant capability level required in each role.

Use an example one-page profile to provide a snapshot of who you are looking for: Be as specific as you can! What skills, attributes do the people you are looking for as volunteers have? What are the interests and likely motivations of this person or group? How do they like to be communicated with? Include answers to these questions and more in the profile you develop.

Establish where and how to find them:
Based on the information in the potential volunteer's one-page profile, choose:
*   The most likely place your volunteer will see your message (e.g. social media, local paper or local community meeting).

*   The type of communication that is most appropriate (small advertisement, community talk, poster).

*   Language that suits 'what's important to' a potential volunteer to entice them to respond. For example, you are unlikely to find young social media expert with an ad in the local paper. A stall at a university skills expo or on social media itself will be more likely.

Identify volunteer roles:
Volunteer assistance is not limited to direct support. Consider other roles in the organisation where volunteers can add value. Volunteers can work on marketing campaigns or social media promotion, whilst others may be better suited to finance roles or grant writing.

The ABS reports that only 5% of the people surveyed commenced volunteering in response to a media campaign, yet 64% of volunteers first got involved in volunteering through someone they know. Enhance your targeted approach by utilising current supporters or volunteers to recruit from their network of friends, family and interest groups. Consider recognition for successful recommendations.

e.g.

A local organisation engaged youth volunteers to go on camps with kids with disability but needed more volunteers. Previously the organisation had only recruited via ads in the local paper which parents would read and urge their children to join. The volunteer coordinator tried a different approach by speaking at her old high school and received a large number of applications. This worked well as she went straight to the source and appealed to the 'career, values and social' motivation of potential volunteers in the audience.
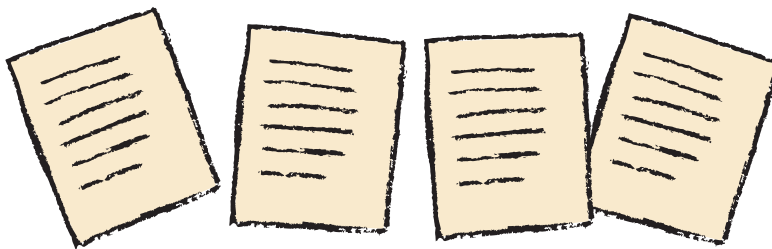
Additional Resources

* Tools, tips and template -using the donut tool with volunteers.
* Technique, tool and template - matching staff.
* Tool, tips and template - one-page profiles to recruit volunteers, guide for organisations and potential volunteers.
* Technique, tips and template - using reverse one-page profiles to advertise.
* Tool and tips - using the 'motivational tool' to identify methods of recruiting volunteers.

Definitions

The term **individual(s)** refers to an individual with a disability and their family and/or circle of support.

The term **staff/employees(s)** refer to paid members of the organisations workforce. Employment relationships with the organisation may be permanent, casual, full-time, part-time, etc.

The term **volunteer(s)** refers to an unpaid individual willingly giving their time to provide a service or support.