Steps to Success: Volunteers

Start by reviewing your worksheet “Getting to Know Your Library: Volunteers”.

**Step 1. List Tasks Needed.** Consider the library as a whole. Which tasks could be supported by volunteers? How long do these functions typically last? What requirements are needed to perform this task? Pro tip: don’t leave anything out. No everyone will be able to read small print, stand for long periods of time, or lift materials.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Task | Length of Time | Requirements |
| *Example: Assisting with a class on internet skills* | *Duration of class: 1-2 hours* | *Knowledge of computer and internet functionality; may require standing for long periods of time.* |
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**Step 2. Create a Volunteer Position Description.**

Use the following template to create a position. Areas highlighted in yellow need to be altered. When finished, copy and paste the information into a new document—you’ll want to share it!

**<Name of Library>**

<Address of Library>

**What:**

The <Example Public Library> provides vital services to the community, and volunteers will make a difference in the ability of the library to serve < Example> and the surrounding area. Volunteers are currently needed to < task>. <Task>are usually <Description of task.> <Tasks> are <length of task, such as 1 hour>

When applying for this position, consider these special requirements:

* <Ability to work independently>
* <Physical strength necessary to transport materials and push/pull carts>
* <Ability to stand for extended periods of time>
* <Ability to stand on stepstool while removing or replacing materials on shelves>
* <Ability to squat while removing or replacing materials on shelves>
* <Ability to read shelf labels>

**When:**

**<Monday—Friday:>** <Various times during the day and/or evening>

<How often task will be needed. Weekly? Bi-weekly?> <For example, 6:30 p.m. to8:00 p.m.

on Thursdays.> Dates must be worked out < at least two weeks> in advance so the library can advertise the classes and register participants.

**Contact: <**Your Name>

<555-555-5555>

[awesome@guidingohioonline.com](mailto:awesome@guidingohioonline.com)

**Step 3. Create a Volunteer Application Form**

On the “Getting to Know Your Library: Volunteers” worksheet, is there an existing volunteer program? If so, is there a volunteer application and can that volunteer application be used for this program?

If not, use the following to create your own volunteer application using this template. Areas highlighted in yellow need to be edited. When finished, copy and paste the information into a new document.:

**Name of Library**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Home phone:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Cell:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to be contacted at: home \_\_\_ cell \_\_\_ email \_\_\_ no preference \_\_\_

**Emergency contact:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**(Name/phone/relationship to you)**

**Employment history**: please tell us about your most recent paid positions, if applicable:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Employer | Dates of Employment | Description of your Duties |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Volunteer history**: please tell us about your volunteer experiences, if applicable:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Organization | Dates Volunteered | Description of your Duties |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Education (highest grade completed):** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Are you a currently a College Student? *Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_*

**Gender:** M\_\_\_F\_\_\_\_

Are you 18 years or older? *Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_* Where you born between 1946-1964? *Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_*

**Are you applying for a specific volunteer position?** *If so, which one?* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Do you need community service hours?** *Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_*

***If yes****, for: college \_\_\_ workplace \_\_\_ court-ordered \_\_\_ other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

***If yes****, how many hours do you need? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ By what date? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**Are you applying for a short-term volunteer position?** *If so, what dates are you available?*

**Why are you interested in volunteering with the Library?**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**I prefer to work: in public\_\_\_ behind the scenes\_\_\_ either\_\_\_**

**I prefer to work: alone\_\_\_ with a group\_\_\_ either\_\_\_**

**Areas of Interest** (select all that apply). Please note: not all areas are available at all times.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Computers – data entry, spreadsheets, etc. |  | <Other> |
|  | Computers – searching/editing library catalog |  | <Other> |
|  | Computers – scanning documents |  | <Other> |
|  | Proofreading documents |  | <Other> |
|  | Assisting with <task> |  |  |
|  | Computer Class helper |  |  |
|  | <other program> |  |  |
|  | Preparing / organizing materials for programs |  |  |
|  | Proficiency in a language other than English (please specify: |  |  |

**Days and times available to work**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Hours preferred per week: 1-2 \_\_\_ 3-4\_\_\_ 4-6\_\_\_ less frequent than weekly \_\_\_**

Depending on assignment and workload, < volunteers may work up to 6 hours/week.>

**I prefer to volunteer: on a regular schedule \_\_\_ as-needed / occasionally \_\_\_ both \_\_\_**

**Preferred location: <Location 1> \_\_\_ <Location 2>\_\_\_ <Location 3>\_\_**

Check all libraries where you are willing to volunteer.

I certify that all statements made in my volunteer application are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I give <Library Name> the permission to verify all information contained in this application as may be necessary.< I understand that I must submit to a background check before being assigned any volunteer responsibility at library Name>

I understand that there is no salary or other compensation for my services as a volunteer. I understand that my assignment may be terminated by the Library or myself with or without prior notice at any time.

I agree to read, sign and adhere to the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Please return your completed application by mail, email or fax to:*

*<YOUR NAME>*

*<PHONE NUMBER>*

*<EMAIL ADDRESS>*

*Or return it to any public service desk at <Name of Library>.*

**Step 4. Match Skills and Demographics to Program**

On the “Getting to Know Your Library: Volunteers”, is there an existing volunteer program? Could existing volunteers be used for computer classes/trainings/etc?

On the “Getting to Know Your Library: Volunteers”, were there organizations that the library has used for volunteers before? Would they be able to assist with these tasks?

Consider, are there special skill sets that you would look for a professional volunteer for? What local organizations might have someone on staff that has that skill?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Skill | Organization |
| *Example: A Human Resources (HR) professional to look over resumes.* | *PBJ Steel has an HR department* |
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Are there service-learning or community service requirements for students at local junior high/high schools or for National Honor Society Students? Call the school(s) and ask.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Name of School | Phone number | Community Service? |
| *Example: Peach St. Middle School* | *555-555-7245* | *Only for 8th graders. 15 hours.* |
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**Step 5. Recruitment**

Now that you know what task you want volunteers to do, and who in your community can do them, it’s time to pair the two together. Place volunteer position descriptions at community bulletin boards you identified in the Getting to Know Your Library: Marketing worksheet. See if the school groups and organizations you identified in Step 4 will let you speak to that group. Attend other community fairs and festivals to talk to the community about volunteering at the library.

**Step 6. Interview Potential Volunteers.**

Once you have potential volunteers, you want to make sure they’re a good fit for the library. Use the following template to get you started:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Confirm application information:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Address |  | Preferred contact method |  |
| Phone |  | Emergency contact |  |
| Email |  |  |  |

1. Tell me about yourself. Education? Interests? Background? Family?
2. Are you currently employed?
3. If not employed, are you in the job market? What sort of opportunity/work are you looking for?
4. Why do you want to volunteer? In general, or at the library in particular?
5. How did you hear about volunteering at the library?
6. What do you hope to get out of a volunteer experience?
7. Have you volunteered elsewhere before?
8. What did you do there? Did you enjoy it?
9. When you think about volunteering at the library, did you have any particular jobs in mind?
10. From your past experience, either working or volunteering, do you know what kind of jobs you like to do? What kind of jobs you don’t like to do?
11. What do you think you need as a volunteer to make this a positive experience for you?
12. Which library is closest to your house? At which library(ies) are you willing to volunteer?
13. What are your computer skills? Do you know Microsoft Office? Are you comfortable with email and Internet searching? Data entry?
14. When are you available?

Mondays \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Tuesdays \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Wednesdays \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Thursdays \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Fridays \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Saturdays \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sundays \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you looking for a summer / short-term opportunity or an open-ended opportunity?
2. Would you prefer a set schedule or more flexible timing?
3. When are you available to start?

## My Recommendations (you fill out this section on your own)

What position would this volunteer be good for?

Which Location?

Comments:

**How should the library follow up?**

**Step 7. Volunteer Orientation and Training.**

Your volunteers are going to need an introduction to the library. Every library and project are a little bit different, but here’s a checklist for computer classes to get you started:

* Tour:
* Show the meeting room and how the laptops will be set up.
* Explain how wireless printing works.
* Explain the security on public computers.
* Go over handouts. Explain why it’s important to cover the material as is and leave plenty of time for questions. Make sure the volunteer is familiar with the versions of Windows, Microsoft Office and Internet Explorer that we have installed on the computers they will be using.
* Information Literacy 101:
* Why it’s important to teach people how to evaluate the source of information found on the Internet
* Password security
* General Internet safety
* How to respond if they are asked questions they don’t know how to answer
* Library philosophy 101:
* We don’t make value judgments about how people use the Internet or what websites they like.
* Patron privacy
* How to answer questions about filters
* What a typical class is like including: allow participants plenty of time to practice. Participants may be afraid they will break something and/or not have great hand dexterity and may have trouble operating the mouse or track pad. Your patience will be rewarded with their gratitude.
* Contact information (to give or not to give)

**Step 8. Tracking and Monitoring Volunteers**

It’s important to make sure your volunteers are getting the direction they need to be successful. In addition to tracking your volunteer’s hours, ask them about their passions and pursuits. You’ll learn more about them and find areas to help them grow as a volunteer.

**Step 9. Recognizing Your Volunteers**

It’s very important to recognize your volunteers for their service. Ask your site supervisor, is there any money to have a small volunteer recognition party? If not, see if a local restaurant or grocery store would be willing to donate refreshments or consider having a potluck.

Other great ideas to recognize your volunteers include certificates of service or awards for a job well done.

**Step 10. Evaluating the Program**

One excellent way to demonstrate a volunteer program’s impact is to measure the return on investment.

First, calculate the amount the library spends on volunteers. For a given year, add up all expenditures related to the use of volunteers. This would include the costs of copies, your time and other staff time training and recruiting the volunteers.

Next, for each volunteer function, estimate the hourly wage rate. Use the HandsOn Network’s calculator <http://www.handsonnetwork.org/tools/volunteercalculator> to identify the hourly wage rate for various labor categories. You can also use your library’s existing wage rates or the widely accepted Independent Sector valuation of $18.77 per average volunteer hour. Next multiply the market wage per hour by the number of hours an individual volunteer donate for this task. Then do the same for another volunteer. Then add all the volunteer contributions together to find the total.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Cost per hour | X Number of hours | =Volunteer Value |
| Volunteer 1 |  |  |  |
| Volunteer 2 |  |  |  |
| Volunteer 3 |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL** |  |  |  |

To find the volunteer investment ratio, divide the total volunteer value (the total line in the above table) by the total volunteer investment to determine the return on investment.

**Fill in the blank:** For Every $1 the Library spent on Volunteers, we received \_\_\_\_\_ back in Volunteer Hours.