Good Practice Guidelines

2: Volunteering

Introduction

These good practice guidelines support the learning and development of community and non-profit organisations engaged in and enabling volunteering. Drawing on sector resources and research, they have been developed by the Centre for Social Impact for Rātā Foundation and Foundation North.

Indicators of Good Practice

Indicator #1: **Organisational strategy reflects volunteers' role**	An organisation that involves volunteers should acknowledge and recognise, through its strategic plans, the volunteers' role in supporting it to achieve its goals. This helps: • to reinforce the connection between the organisation and its volunteers • the volunteers to see and understand their part in achieving the organisation's mission and vision, alongside paid staff • the organisation to ensure that its volunteers' time is focused on its strategy and helps it to achieve desired outcomes.
Indicator #2: **Organisational culture includes volunteers**	Having an inclusive and respectful organisational culture can: • help volunteers to feel recognised for their role and contribution • boost their sense of belonging • secure their commitment to giving their time, skills and expertise. The characteristics of a positive culture for volunteers include: • a collegial and supportive volunteer-management style • volunteering story-sharing via the organisation's website, internal communications and social media • a communication platform that matches the volunteer demographic, such as Instagram for young volunteers and kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) communication for Māori and older volunteers • volunteer inclusion in surveys on organisational changes that will affect them • training and development opportunities for paid staff on working effectively with volunteers.
Indicator #3: **Appropriate volunteer placements**	Volunteers should be well matched to placements to ensure: • enriching volunteering experiences • cultural and organisational appropriateness for both parties.

Indicator #4: Appropriate organisational policies

Organisations working with volunteers should have well designed policies, practices and systems for supporting and managing those volunteers. These include:

- robust volunteer recruitment and retention systems
- inclusive and informative volunteer orientation and induction processes
- training and development opportunities that enable volunteers to develop and enhance their knowledge and skills
- transparency in the use of koha (gifts) and/or volunteer expense payments
- risk-management procedures and practices for volunteers
- job descriptions that are clear about the volunteer role
- policies that uphold the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Indicator #5: Good practice volunteer management

Every organisation that works regularly with volunteers should have a designated 'volunteer manager' who is responsible for:

- recruiting volunteers with the required attributes
- inducting, training, supporting and retaining volunteers
- ensuring that volunteers are assigned roles that are appropriate and in line with the organisation's strategy.

The volunteer manager should:

- have sound management, people and programme-planning skills
- ideally be part of the senior leadership team, so they can contribute to budget and other organisational decisions that affect volunteers.

Indicator #6: Volunteer organisations are culturally responsive

Good-practice volunteering supports the contributions of Māori, Pacific and ethnically diverse volunteers to their communities through mahi aroha (volunteering). Organisations engaging Māori volunteers should develop their understanding of tikanga Māori (Māori customs, practices and protocols) and the role of mahi aroha in supporting Māori wellbeing.

Organisations that connect with diverse and marginalised communities through their volunteers should be guided by the appropriate cultural frameworks (such as language and cultural values). Ideally, their volunteers should reflect the diversity of the communities they serve.

Indicator #7: Understanding the difference that volunteers make

It is good practice for organisations engaging volunteers to monitor and evaluate their efforts. This not only helps volunteers to see the impacts of their efforts, but also rewards and encourages their continuing involvement.

Regular communication on the differences that volunteers make can:

- help volunteers to understand their contributions to the organisation and their role in its achieving strategic goals and objectives
- help the organisation to build a business case for funding
- help the organisation to tell its story to external stakeholders.

Demonstrating Good Practice

When seeking funding, organisations that engage volunteers should describe how their work aligns with the seven indicators of good practice. This is particularly important for those seeking funding for volunteer activities, and in showing the in-kind value that volunteers contribute alongside grant income.

Many funders expect to see evidence of:

- policies and procedures that ensure positive outcomes for volunteers and the people they support

- volunteers being included in the organisation's strategy and operations

- volunteers being well supported in their role, such as through induction, management, supervision and personal development

- volunteers being well matched to the organisation and the communities it serves

- the organisation's cultural responsiveness to its volunteers and to the communities it serves through its volunteers

- the organisation's volunteer monitoring and evaluation system and ability to communicate to volunteers the difference they make.

Key Questions:
Can We Strengthen our Volunteering Practice?

> Does our organisation align with Volunteer New Zealand's Best Practice Guidelines for Volunteer-Involving Organisations (see Key Resources)?

> Do we have organisational policies and procedures that ensure our volunteers have positive and safe volunteering experiences?

> How do we ensure that volunteers feel part of our organisation and have a sense of belonging and commitment?

> How are we culturally responsive to our volunteers and the communities we and they serve?

> Are we collecting the right data to tell our volunteers about the difference they make, and how they help us to achieve our vision?

Key Resources for More Information

1 **Government Policy on Volunteering** (Department of Internal Affairs, 2002)

   www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/Files/Government-Policy-on-Volunteering/$file/Government-Policy-on-Volunteering.pdf

2 **The Hub of New Zealand Volunteering** (Volunteering New Zealand)

   www.volunteeringnz.org.nz/

3 **Best Practice Guidelines for Volunteer-Involving Organisations** (Volunteering New Zealand)

   www.volunteeringnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/BP-GUIDEINES-v3-RF-Print.pdf]

4 **Volunteering Best Practice Toolkit** (Volunteering New Zealand)

   www.volunteeringnz.org.nz/resources/best-practice-toolkit/

5 **InvolveMe - An Online Assessment Tool for Better Volunteering** (Volunteering New Zealand)

   www.involveme.nz

6 **Volunteering Resources for Community Organisations** (Volunteering Waikato)

   volunteeringwaikato.org.nz/resources

7 **Volunteer Management Toolkit** (Creative New Zealand)

   www.creativenz.govt.nz/development-and-resources/volunteer-management-toolkit

Habitat for Humanity New Zealand is a non-profit organisation that helps Kiwi families to build their own sustainable and affordable homes. It provides at least 500 hours of 'sweat equity' to build the homes and is supported by Habitat volunteers.

Habitat demonstrates good practice by:

- recognising that volunteers are critical to its achievements. "Volunteers are crucial to what we do. Volunteers are the heart of Habitat. Whatever your experience, stage of life, skillset or passion, there is a place for you here"

- communicating clearly the value that volunteers receive from engaging with the organisation, including construction skills and opportunities to build connections in their local communities

- training volunteers in a range of relevant skills

- stating on its website that volunteers of all ages and from all cultures are welcome.

For more information on Habitat for Humanity New Zealand, visit: habitat.org.nz

This good practice resource was developed in 2019 by:

References and Resources

1. Conservation Volunteers New Zealand. *In Safe Hands Toolkit - A safety management toolkit for community groups involved in environmental activities.* Retrieved from: https://conservationvolunteers.co.nz/what-we-do/in-safe-hands-toolkit/

2. Department of Internal Affairs. (2002). *Government Policy on Volunteering*. Retrieved from: https://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/Files/Government-Policy-on-Volunteering/$file/Government-Policy-on-Volunteering.pdf

3. Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector. (2007). *Mahi Aroha: Māori Perspectives on Volunteering and Cultural Obligations*. Community and Voluntary Sector, Tari Mö te Rängai ä-Hapori, ä-Tüao, Wellington. Retrieved from: http://whanauoraresearch.co.nz/files/formidable/mahi-aroha1.pdf

4. Smith, K. A., & Cordery, C. (2010). *What works? A systematic review of research and evaluation literature on encouragement and support of volunteering.* Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University of Wellington. Retrieved from: https://www.dia.govt.nz/pubforms.nsf/URL/WhatWorksVolunteering.pdf/$file/WhatWorksVolunteering.pdf

5. Smith, K. A., Cordery, C. & Dutton, N. (2010). *Managers Matter: who manages New Zealand's volunteers?* Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University of Wellington. Retrieved from: https://www.victoria.ac.nz/vbs/research-services/documents/managers-matter-full-report.pdf

6. United Nations Volunteers. (2011). *State of the World's Volunteerism Report 2011: Universal Values for Global Well-being.* New York. Retrieved from: https://www.unv.org/publications/2011-state-world%E2%80%99s-volunteerism-report-universal-values-global-well-being

7. Volunteering Australia. *A toolkit for training volunteers*. Retrieved from:

   Part A: https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/files_mf/1377052716VaGuidetotrainingvolunteerspartA.pdf
   Part B: https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/files_mf/1377052757VaGuidetotrainingvolunteerspartB.pdf

8. Volunteering Australia. (2006). Involving volunteers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. National Volunteers Skills Centre, Volunteering Australia. Retrieved from: https://volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/files_mf/1377052800VAManagersinvolvingvolunteersfromculturallyandlinguisticallydiversebackgrounds.pdf

9. Volunteering NZ. *InvolveMe - An online assessment tool for better volunteering*. Retrieved from https://www.involveme.nz/

10. Volunteering New Zealand. *Volunteering Best Practice Toolkit*. Retrieved from: https://www.volunteeringnz.org.nz/resources/best-practice-toolkit/

11. Volunteering New Zealand. (2016). *State of Volunteering in New Zealand 2015*. Volunteering New Zealand, Wellington. Retrieved from: http://www.volunteeringnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/VNZ_Stateofvolunteer_FINAL2015.pdf

12.   Volunteering Waikato. *Volunteering resources for community organisations*. Retrieved from:
https://volunteeringwaikato.org.nz/resources

13.   Wanwimolruk, M. (2013). *Volunteerism: Alive and well or dying quietly? Learnings from New Zealand community based organisations, volunteerism experts and social enterprises.* Retrieved from:
http://www.communityresearch.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/formidable/Wanwimolruk_Volunteering_Alive-and-Well-or-Dying-Quietly_Learnings-from-NZ-community-orgs-experts-and-social-enterprise_Nov-2014.pdf