



Designing a Successful Volunteer Recruitment Advertisement

Taking the time and care to create an effective advertising campaign is crucial in the overall recruitment process. Getting your advertising right will improve success rates and speed up the process of finding suitable volunteers to involve in your organisation.

Volunteer Role Description

Before advertising for volunteers you should first develop a volunteer role description. All the details you need to create your ad will already be in a properly developed role description!

Identify your Target Audience

Understand whom you are trying to communicate with and how you might tailor your ad to attract your audience. Use suitable language and choose the right media through which to reach them. For example, advertising online is suitable for a younger age group (18-36) while local press or radio may reach a wider audience.

Create a Catchy Title

Create a catchy title for your volunteer role. A catchy title will ensure your ad grabs people's attention. Be sure the title also accurately represents the role.

Advertising Design & Copy Layout

Put time and thought into the design, language and copy layout of the advertisement:

- Break up the body copy by using bullet points. Avoid using long unwieldy sentences.
- Pick a font style and size that can be clearly read.
- Bullet points and short concise sentences will help potential volunteers scan through an ad and quickly understand it.
- The use of emotive imagery is also very powerful in grabbing attention and invoking a reaction.

State your Organisation's Mission

Provide a simple one liner about your organisation and its mission.

Sell the Opportunity

Remember there are lots of organisations looking for volunteers so its important to portray your organisation and the role in the best possible light. And remember that the ad should also accurately represent the role!

Highlight Time Commitment

Don't forget to highlight the required time commitment – whether it is 2 hours a week or 10 hours per month. If this information is omitted, potential volunteers may assume a large time commitment is required and will therefore not apply.

List the Benefits

Outline what the volunteer will gain by getting involved with your organisation: a chance to make a difference, help others, make new friends, gain work experience or even the beginnings of a new career.

Explain the Application Process

It sounds obvious but explain the next steps in the application process. If interested, what should they do next? Is there an application form? Who should they contact? Is there an interview process? What is the expected start date?

Provide Contact Details

Always include a phone number and contact person for volunteers to call if they want more information. If you have a website, provide a link to it. Ensure you have the resources in place to respond to applicants within 1-2 days. Not responding promptly portrays a negative image of your organisation and causes potential volunteers to lose interest.

Where to Advertise

Typically, using a combination of advertising methods delivers results and reaches new groups in the community. Utilise local press and radio. Hang posters in local job centres or on notice boards in shops or businesses. Try church newsletters. Make presentations to local businesses or attend volunteer fairs. Other successful methods are word of mouth, friends and family of service users, staff or existing volunteers. You can place ads free of charge with your local volunteer centre or simply go to www.volunteer.ie and post your opportunity online yourself.