

Diversifying your Volunteers



Developing a diverse team ...

Widening your range of volunteers takes time, effort and commitment and unless you're convinced that the benefits outweighs the struggle to change, then you will not succeed.

Why diversify?

There are so many benefits to diversifying your workforce. A diverse workforce brings a wide range of skills and experiences from different people. Organisations and groups have their own reasons for wanting to attract a wider variety of volunteers. For some, it's about being more representative in the community in which they operate or relevant to the service they provide; For example, you might be looking to recruit female volunteers as advocates for a women's project.

In other cases, you might be looking for specific qualities or experience. Life experience can be particularly valuable, depending on the type of service that you are delivering. Older volunteers can bring a wealth of knowledge and experience, often from a range of different jobs and may be more likely to volunteer with you longer, whereas some younger volunteers, not all, might re-locate, or be utilising volunteering in the short term, as a route to employment. Younger volunteers can often bring a fresh perspective and new ideas. Similarly, volunteers with disabilities can also bring a different perspective and change the way that we view volunteering and our services, enabling us to view the world in a different way.

Breaking down barriers to Volunteering

People from all sections of the community may have reservations about volunteering for one or a few of the following reasons:

- They might have been out of work a long time, it's a big step for a lot of people.
- They may fear discrimination due to their gender, race, age or sexuality
- They might be in recovery, or suffering with a long term health condition and worried that this may impact on their volunteering
- They might have a physical disability and worry about accessibility and how this may affect their volunteering.

Final Thought....

It's really important to embrace diversity and ensure that your workplace is a welcoming environment that promotes and imbeds equality and diversity. For more information visit: