Virtual Volunteering

Presented by: Kevin Noseworthy
Volunteer and Special Events, Coordinator, Langs & Past President,
Brant Regional Association of Volunteer Administrators

Presentation Objectives

- To understand how to adapt and make volunteer roles virtual

- To learn about online tools, apps and software that can be used to support a virtual volunteer program

- To discover the benefits of virtual volunteering for volunteers and organizations

Presentation Topics

1. Basic, intermediate, and advanced virtual volunteer roles

2. Steps to plan and implement a virtual volunteer program including revising policies and procedures, completing a risk review, and completing a program plan

3. Volunteer rights, responsibilities, choices and how staff can support their volunteers with attaining these goals

Converting In-Person Volunteer Roles to a Virtual Format

Board meetings in-person

Virtual board meetings

Converting In-Person Volunteer Roles to a Virtual Format

Organizations need to take the following steps to convert an in person volunteer role into a virtual role:

1. Review each volunteer position description to determine if it can be adapted to a virtual format or not

2. Decide if the process requires the support of IT, Board of Directors, Consultants, Legal advice, etc.

3. Outline realistic timelines on development, testing and implementation

4. Determine if new training will need to be offered to volunteers for their safety and success

5. For higher risk roles, policies and procedures will need to be written to protect the organization, volunteers and clients

6. Revise volunteer position descriptions, volunteer handbook and volunteer policies/procedures manual; and

7. New waivers may have to be introduced

Survey results

Volunteer Canada surveyed organizations and volunteer managers, below are the results of "The Volunteering Lens of COVID-19" survey conducted in October 2020:

Results:

- 96% of organizations suspended, postponed or cancelled some or all of their programs, services or activities

- 51% transitioned to virtual roles

- 40% suspended all volunteer engagement until further notice

- 52% increase in virtual volunteer roles at time of survey

- 51% of respondents anticipated that virtual volunteer roles will continue and increase for the next 3 months or longer

Virtual Volunteer Roles and Recruitment Measures

Basic Virtual Roles

- Advertising/ marketer
- Blog writer
- Board member
- Committee member
- Content Writer
- Meeting secretary
- Program planning
- Virtual program facilitator
- Youth Council

Intermediate Virtual Roles

- Administrative
- Advocate
- Friendly visitor
- Game developer
- Grant writer
- Historical interpreter
- Music teacher
- Podcast voice actor
- Research purchaser
- Social media developer
- Sponsorship coordinator
- Tourism guide
- Translator
- Volunteer coordinator

Advanced Virtual Roles

- Counsellor
- Data entry volunteer
- Dental/medical scheduler
- Dietician
- Fundraiser
- Intake coordinator
- IT systems administrator
- Nutritionist
- Personal trainer/coach
- Scheduler
- Tutor
- Videographer
- Website developer

Recruitment measures

- Organization's website
- Volunteer Action Centre(s)
- Social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat)
- Professional online networking and recruiting (e.g., LinkedIn)
- Business intranet and/or online newsletters
- YouTube video channel

Creating Virtual Volunteer Roles

Policies and procedures

Risk management

Planning

Resources

Orientation and Training

Orientation – Virtual Volunteers

- Set up a proper, ergonomic work station

- Plan a regular volunteer schedule

- Minimize noise and distractions

- Acquire strong internet source & wi-fi

- Install virus protection software

- Arrange for volunteers to speak with IT for set up and ongoing support

- Abide by professional, ethical and behavioural guidelines of the organization

- Invite volunteers to join staff during online meetings to collaborate and connect with

- Demonstrate the value of the volunteer's virtual participation via impact statements

Training – Virtual Volunteers

- Volunteer handbooks – online

- Pandemic and post pandemic policies & procedures

- Annual General Meeting video and AGM Reports

- Strategic Plans – working documents

- Volunteer Policies & Procedures Manual

- Invitation to new staff, volunteer and student training

- Job Shadowing video series

- Virtual tour of sites

- Organizational Chart – Employee contact info

Online tools, apps, and software

Communication
- Constant contact
- Punchbowl
- DropBox
- Google Chat
- Google Translate
- Google Hangouts

Collaboration software
- Quip
- Google Drive
- Google Forms
- Google Workspace
- Google slides

Icebreaker online games
- Kahoot
- Mino
- Collaboard

Scheduling and surveying
- Doodle Poll
- Survey Monkey
- Get Feedback
- In Touch Survey
- Qualtrics

Volunteer management/ CRM databases
- Better Impact
- Charity Republic
- Donor Perfect
- Google Contacts
- Sumac
- Volgistics

This is a limited list of suggested online tools, applications, and software.

Online tools, apps, and software

Online Signature /
Secure documents transfer
- Docusign
- Pandadoc
- Hello Sign
- Signwell
- Adobe
- Google Authenticator

Event tickets &
Management
- Event Brite
- Cvent
- Event Create
- Wix

Design /Presentations
- Be Funky
- Pinterest
- Canva
- Power Point
- Google Photoscan
- Google Slides
- Pic Monkey
- Venngage

Task Management
- Todoist
- Habitica
- Trello
- Toggl

Video Conference
- Zoom
- Microsoft Teams
- Google Duo
- What's App
- Skype
- Google Classroom
- Google Meet

This is a limited list of suggested online tools, applications, and software.

Steps to take to ensure a secure virtual meeting

1. Review settings for more control (ie: sharing of screen, invitees can join before host, invitees can join group at anytime, recording of conference, participants video/audio capability)
2. Virtual meetings should have a unique meeting id and a strong password password
3. You even have the option of creating unique links and passwords for each invitee.
4. Request that all invitees not share the meeting links, id or password with others to ensure a secure meeting
5. For sensitive meetings use the Business or Enterprise versions of Zoom to take advantage of the feature allowing you to host conference data on your own server
6. Assign a co-host to monitor interruptions or breaches
7. Use the Waiting Room feature, so you can review who wants to enter your meeting, so you can allow entry to only those you wish to have in your meeting.
8. Lock meetings when all participants have joined

Supervision and Communication

Evaluation and Recognition

Evaluation

✓ 1-3 month check in and probation

✓ Annual volunteer experience surveys

✓ Mid and final scheduled evaluations

✓ Input and attendance from
- ❑ Staff
- ❑ Supervisors
- ❑ volunteer manager
- ❑ field placement officer
- ❑ Teachers
- ❑ Etc.

✓ Volunteers and Placement Students should have the chance to provide feedback
- ❑ Conditions of the work environment
- ❑ How supportive and fair staff were
- ❑ Resources (accessible, useful and offered with instruction)
- ❑ Work load / Meeting volunteer or student goals and objectives
- ❑ Opportunity to offer suggestions on how to make the volunteer and student placement program better for future volunteers and students

Evaluation and Recognition

Recognition

- ✓ Offer gifts that can support their virtual resources, including: mouse pad, wireless mouse, free app, stylus, screen cleaner cloth and solution, online training, honorarium to help pay for better wi-fi

- ✓ Arrange a video message of thanks from your CEO, Chair of the Board or a celebrity by using Cameo or Memmo websites

- ✓ Offer compliments

- ✓ Ask for their opinion

- ✓ Include them in meetings, focus groups

- ✓ Promote them to other volunteer opportunities

- ✓ Letters of reference – to assist them with applications for education, employment or other volunteer opportunity pursuits

- ✓ Nominate them for a volunteer award

- ✓ Invite them to an event (online or in person)

- ✓ Send an e-card of thanks

- ✓ Profile them on the next online newsletter

- ✓ Share their contributions and photo in the Annual General Meeting Report

- ✓ Credit them on Impact social media posts

Rights, Choices, and Responsibilities

Volunteer rights

E.g., right to be provided with proper training

Volunteer choices

E.g., ability to choose day/time of volunteering

Volunteer responsibilities

E.g., report participants who break rules

Benefits of virtual volunteering

Corporate group volunteering
- Using their own workstations
- Saving commute time
- Working with other colleagues

Family volunteering
- Volunteering from home
- Bonding through projects
- Teaching about technology
- Monitoring internet use
- Teaching about online safety
- Supporting local, national, and international initiatives

Employee volunteering
- Volunteering during business hours
- Matching interests, skills, experiences, and availability
- Receiving company awards and recognition
- Using different skills and knowledge

Future of virtual volunteering

- Increasing number of rural virtual volunteers
- Expanding use of software and volunteer portals
- Improving accuracy of scheduling and timeclock features
- Saving time and increasing opportunities to volunteer

Summary

- Virtual volunteering is here for the long haul and will continue to advance
- Organizations will continue to explore ways to engage volunteers virtually
- Meeting virtually will continue to be offered as an alternative

References

Cyber security advisory – Zoom. (2020). Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/memos/Zoom_Advisory_April_9_2020.pdf

Hager, M. (2021). Adjusting remote online volunteer management: Topline report of the Technology Evolution in Volunteer Administration (TEVA) survey. https://cvacert.org/teva/

Imagine Canada (2021). The ongoing COVID-19 experience of Canadian charities. https://www.imaginecanada.ca/sites/default/files/Sector-Monitor-report-highlights-2021.pdf

The Israeli Volunteer Council. (2020). Checklist for volunteering using virtual channels. International Association for Volunteer Effort. https://www.iave.org/iavewp/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/checklist-english.pdf

Johanne Deschamps. (2020). COVID-19 and resilience in the voluntary sector with Kathleen Douglass. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5tvODCoyzE

References

Volunteer Canada. (2010). Bridging the gap.
https://volunteer.ca/vdemo/researchandresources_docs/Bridging%20the%20Gap%20Summary.pdf

Volunteer Canada & Great Place to Work in partnership with the Corporate Community Engagement Council. (2019). The business case for giving back.
https://volunteer.ca/AdminEdit.php?ListType=Material_Download&MenuItemID=403

Volunteer Canada. (2020). Keeping volunteers engaged while programs and services are suspended due to COVID-19. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDCJ1Ck9iVk
Volunteer Canada. (2020). Organization survey results: The volunteering lens of COVID-19. https://volunteer.ca/index.php?MenuItemID=433

Volunteer Canada. (2020). Volunteering lens of COVID-19: Fall survey results virtual volunteering.
https://volunteer.ca/vdemo/ResearchAndResources_DOCS/Vol%20Lens%202020%20Survey%20Results/Fall%20Survey%20-%20Virtual%20Volunteering%20Infographic%20EN.png

References

Volunteer Canada and Volunteer Action Centre Waterloo Region. (2016). Volunteer management handbook: A resource for service-providing organizations assisting newcomers to Canada. https://volunteer.ca/vdemo/EngagingVolunteers_DOCS/VMH_Eng_2016_Print.pdf

Volunteer Toronto. (2016). Volunteer supervision: Resource guide & workbook. https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.volunteertoronto.ca/resource/resmgr/Online_Resources/Workbook/VS_Final.pdf