

# Volunteer Management

## Nationally-recognised qualifications

You can now get credit for your skills, knowledge and expertise in managing volunteers with distance learning courses put on by Voluntary Action Sheffield.

There are Level 3 and Level 4 Awards and a Level 4 Certificate in Volunteer Management covering the three key stages of volunteer co-ordination: i.e. organisational arrangements, policies and practice; finding and recruiting volunteers; supporting, supervising and developing volunteers.

Both Awards are suitable for people who have relevant experience, whether or not they are currently in a volunteer manager or co-ordinator role. The Certificate is designed for those who are able to develop and implement changes to a volunteering programme, and who are in a broader management role within their organisation.

Go to [http://www.vas.org.uk/qualifications\\_in\\_volunteer\\_management](http://www.vas.org.uk/qualifications_in_volunteer_management) for further information and prices.

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## Stand out from the crowd

Whether prospective volunteers are looking for a specific role or not, chances are they will have several volunteering opportunities at least to choose from. Here in the Volunteer Centre Central Bedfordshire we have around 350 roles registered at any given time, so how can you get prospective volunteers to choose your organisation's opportunity rather than any other?

Here's a few pointers to start with; but please get in touch for further help.

**What's in a name?** – Avoid 'Volunteer Assistant', 'General Helper' and similar role titles. Try to be accurate and descriptive without making it too long. A good title can attract prospective volunteers to find out more.

**Sell the role** – Make the description of your volunteering opportunity as enticing as possible. Don't just list tasks that need doing, present them as exciting activities. The role must be important or you wouldn't be recruiting, so highlight this and include what it contributes to the work of your organisation. What will a volunteer get out of it? What's going to make someone want to do this role?

**Photos or images** – Any image can help your opportunity stand out on the national volunteering website at do-it.org – and at local events and the like. If you don't have any suitable images relating to specific roles at the moment, your organisation's logo or a general relevant image can be used in the meantime.

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## Micro volunteering

Micro volunteering (aka micro-volunteering and microvolunteering) has been around for a few years but appears to be having a resurgence lately.

So what is micro volunteering? Definitions vary but a generic one would be 'bite-sized, on-demand, no commitment actions that benefit a worthy cause' (thanks [www.microvolunteeringday.com](http://www.microvolunteeringday.com)). My initial reaction was that organising suitable roles would take longer than the time volunteers spend doing them, but having researched the subject some more, it doesn't have to be so. Typically, there's no application process, identity checking or training; the actions take minutes or a couple of hours to do; and participants don't have to commit to ongoing volunteering.

Frequently micro volunteering is done online (there are apps and all sorts that can be downloaded). It can involve simply liking pages on facebook, retweeting or posting news on different sites, contributing to a blog, or analysing data. But there's plenty that can be done offline too. For example: helping to look after a stall at an event, taking part in a sponsored running/swimming event, giving a talk, or baking a cake.

A good way to start may be to ask staff and current volunteers to split existing tasks into smaller bite-sized ones, or to keep a note of those tasks that never seem to get to the top of the 'to do' list.

Are any organisations in Central Bedfordshire offering micro volunteering opportunities already? If you are, we'd love to hear about it. What is working well and what hasn't worked out?

Contact [volunteermanagement@action-centralbeds.org.uk](mailto:volunteermanagement@action-centralbeds.org.uk)

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## Networking Event

Our June Networking Event for Volunteer Managers and Co-ordinators had the theme of Promoting Volunteering Opportunities. It included a presentation and group discussions, along with a buffet lunch and open networking session. Attendees found it a useful event so we're planning another for late November/early December.

Keep your eyes peeled – details will be available from beginning of August. If you would like to pre-reserve a space, please contact [training@action-centralbeds.org.uk](mailto:training@action-centralbeds.org.uk)

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